

THE  
**ECLECTIC**  
AND  
CONGREGATIONAL REVIEW.

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CONTENTS :—NOVEMBER, 1865.

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# THE ECLECTIC, ETC.

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## THE PREACHERS OF THE EARLY CHURCH.— CHRYSOSTOM.\*

IT can never be to the Christian mind either a needless or indifferent task to study again, or in some new portrait to seek to retouch or bring into greater vividness, the sublime features of the fathers of the early church, whose words, while they were living, were like battle-cries against the idolatry, selfishness, and impurity of the age, and which, although the tongue of fire has long been resolved into dust, retain still an inspiring and even vocal power. The orators and preachers of the early church form a very illustrious gallery of portraits; there is much about them that is very exemplary. As we study their words and deeds, we find, in truth, how much, perhaps, they owed of their fame and influence to that close union and alliance of the destinies of the church with the state which continued so manifest after the period of Constantine. But it may surely be questioned whether their influence at court did not result also from the immense power they wielded, over the multitudes of the cities, by the purity of Christian doctrine. The reader of church history will very soon assure himself how the rise of the church illustrated its power by the "foolishness of preaching," and became a great social influence. The wonder grows upon us how it came to be the mighty and hostile force it exhibits itself as being; but the study of the character of the early Christian preachers explains this. The school of the rhetorician was changed into

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- \* 1. *Christian Oratory; An Inquiry into its History during the First Five Centuries.* By Horace M. Moule. Macmillan and Co.
  - 2. *The Life of St. Chrysostom.* Translated from the German of Dr. Neander. By the Rev. J. C. Stapleton, M.A., F.L.S., &c., Rector of Teversal. Seeley.
  - 3. *Ecclesiastici: or, The History of the Fathers of the Church that Flourished in the Fourth Century.* By William Cave, D.D. 1683.

the church—the place of souls; not the place for the discussion of trivial questions, the vain spoils of philosophy; it was a new moral power in the world. Those men did not obtain their mighty hold over the breathless multitudes by the “disputations of science falsely so called,” not by pretty little Platonic essays, but by words which clave a way right down to the soul: enforcing the providence of God, the redemption by Christ, the immortality of the soul, and future retribution and judgment; these were the themes. Fantastic legends and literatures faded out, or fell prostrate and powerless before such truths, flowing from the consciousness of the speaker, informed by the Holy Ghost and the Divine Word, and flaming from the ardent light of vivid experience. The bar, the senate, the school, could kindle no such enthusiasm, and win no such echoes and responses as those which followed the words of the great teachers of those early ages.

It is superfluous to say that Nonconformist teachers have not paid sufficient attention to these great masters. A prejudice, it must be now admitted very unfounded, has obtained in many minds against them. We are truly glad to believe that this prejudice is dissolving; and while we hold it to be the duty, especially, of every minister to inform himself very closely of the matters in the great story of the church, it is certainly true that he will find in the first ages, and among the teaching of the third, fourth, and fifth centuries, hints eminently useful to him in assailing the sins and the heresies of our own times. Especially eminent, as the orator of the church, stands forth John, the great preacher of Antioch, who received in the seventh century the name by which now he is only known popularly, Chrysostom, or, the *Golden Mouth*. He was born in that city over which his eloquence shed such lustre, and amidst the uproars and agitations of which he became so central an actor, in the year 354. His parents were of considerable birth and quality; his father, Secundus, a chief general of the army of Syria, died soon after John was born; his mother, Secunda—not unlike Augustine’s gentle Monica—although, like his father a gentile pagan, continued unmarried after the death of her husband, living for her son, as we gather from an immortal passage, of exquisite beauty, in his writings. She appears to have been a woman of great gravity, beauty, and chastity. At the age of twenty Chrysostom was placed, apparently, beneath the tuition of the great Libanius, a chief master of rhetoric; from him, no doubt, he obtained lessons used with very different purposes to those for which they were given—for John became a Christian, grew weary of what seemed to him the un-

profitable study of rhetoric, and the lessons intended to make the shining orator of the bar, went to furnish the priest, the preacher, and father of the church. It was a source of bitter regret to his old master, and on his death-bed he grieved that there was no successor to his school, because the Christians had stolen John from him. About the early history of Chrysostom, the years before his conversion, there is nothing of the wonderful interest attaching to the unconverted life of Augustine. Chrysostom had not the same sensuous and passionate nature, therefore had not so fierce a conflict to wage with himself; he had not the same great roominess of nature as that of the Bishop of Hippo, in whose soul, before his conversion, every sort and kind of heresy and infidelity seemed at one time or other to find not a momentary but a logical lodgment, until all were put to flight, as he tells us in his immortal confessions. Then Chrysostom had not very long passed youth when he was converted; Augustine, on the contrary, was in the very prime of life, in all the vigour of his studies. Chrysostom had never known the ways of vice and sin; the warm African nature of Augustine had known every seduction of poetry and passion; he had to put away the person very tenderly loved, apparently, and we know in what terms he has celebrated and made immortal his affection for his illegitimate son Adeodatus. But the conversion of Chrysostom was marked by a reality as distinct as that of Augustine; he and his friend Basil—evidently not the great bishop—determined on abandoning the world altogether, and flying to the monastery. This was easy for Basil, who had no worldly ties, but Chrysostom had debts to pay to his position and his property, and, above all, to his mother, whose tender and overwhelming appeal has been preserved to us. She reminded him of all her troubles and miseries in widowhood, all the agitations and disquietudes attending her—a young woman, without a husband—but all borne for his sake; how she was tossed in storm and tempest, determined “not to bring a second husband into *your* father’s house,” not declining the hardships of the iron furnace that, as she says, “I might daily behold *your* face while you were an infant, and have continually before me the image, the character, and resemblance of *your* father.” She implored him not to involve her in a second widowhood. “When you have committed me to the ground, travel whither you please.” Many more words to the same effect the poor mother poured out into the ear and heart of her son. We are afraid that she did not produce so much effect upon him as circumstances. It is a proof of the import-



ance of Chrysostom in Antioch that at this time, although he could not have been much more than twenty years of age, and had not been very long converted, a report was spread that the Church was about to elevate him to the office of a bishop,—our readers will bear in mind the immense difference between our idea of a bishop and that of the early Christians. He fled from the city, going for some time to reside among the monks near Antioch. Of his mother we only hear that she died shortly afterwards; it does not seem probable that he really joined the monks until after that event. The beautiful, chaste, self-denying pagan lady never saw the greatness and glory of her son. She never heard any of those marvellous orations, did not know that the lips which had been so much to her—kissed so fondly and so often, as mothers only can kiss—were, through all after ages, to be called *the golden*. She soon passes out of sight, but assuredly her son did her justice, and treasured her memory. The name and memory of Monica have been held very dear in church history; but let us, as we pass by, look lovingly and tenderly upon, and set a fair white lily over the grave of Secunda. Six years Chrysostom continued among the mountains and the monasteries; for some time he dwelt in a cave with an aged hermit; solitary, shut up in a still more lonely cell, he spent some other two years, taking little rest, pondering closely the Word, conversing with himself; seeking out that he might obtain the grace of spiritual strength to scatter, and rout, and put to flight the sins lurking in his nature. He seems to have been ordained by the Bishop Miletius a reader and deacon of the church in Antioch about the year 381. He returned to the city learned and accomplished in every art and gift necessary to the sacred orator. When he left he was an accomplished rhetorician; and we can well conceive what six years of solitude among the mountains with no other book but the Sacred Word, would have upon a nature able to receive it. The moment soon came when his mighty oratory was put forth with all its vehemence and strength. So long as he continued in Antioch, his voice was like a bell chiming or tolling, and certainly the sonorous notes of the knell predominate over the chime. Among the most intrepid and noble of his orations is the series on The Statues. Oppressed and harassed by taxation, the people of Antioch—naturally a turbulent and unquiet race—rose in tumult and uproar against a warrant for a new assessment. It created no small irritation; they encouraged one another to revolt, until, in the turmoil in the streets, the brazen statues of the emperor and his wife Flavilla were torn down, and dragged ignominiously by ropes, with insolent rudeness and bitter

sarcasm, through the city. Scarcely had the deed been done than all the inhabitants were in mourning and fear. In our country and age such an indignity would very likely produce unhappy results ; what then might be expected in the very era of imperial cruelty ? Fear spread on every hand ; those who could fly the city, fled ; those who were taken were hurried off to prison. The forum, a few days before crowded, was deserted, and here and there a few frightened and trembling people might be seen skulking about with dejected looks. Images of confiscation, death, and worse than death, were before all men's eyes. In the panic, the good Bishop Flavianus took upon himself to go as an ambassador of peace to the emperor. It was winter ; he was aged, and a man of many infirmities. The distance was considerable ; his sister, too, was dying ; but he went. Chrysostom was left in the mourning city ; he walked through it, and saw its profound distress ; its silence only broken by the armed guards with swords and spears resisting the wailing women and children, who were seeking to throng the courts of justice to save their husbands and fathers. While the bishop was on his way to the metropolis, Chrysostom called the people daily to the church ; there, in their agitated and trembling midst, he pronounced those twenty-one homilies concerning the statues. While the bishop was seeking to turn aside the imperial wrath, Chrysostom wrought day by day upon the crowds in the church. The following passage is a very fine illustration of the natural and easy, yet forcible way in which the orator turns the circumstance to account, and, with great art, preaches to the emperor for mercy, while, in reality, he reproves the sins and passions of the people. Thus he exclaims in a passage on

## THE BOUNDLESS LOVING-KINDNESS OF GOD :—

A man has been insulted, and we are all in fear and trembling—both those of us who have been guilty of this insult, and those of us who are conscious of innocence. But God is insulted every day. Why do I say every day ? Rather should I say every hour, by rich and by poor, by those who are at ease, and those who are in trouble, by those who calumniate, and those who are calumniated ; and yet there is never a word of this ; therefore God has permitted our fellow-servant to be insulted, that thou mayest know the loving-kindness of the Lord. This offence has been committed only for the first time, yet we do not on that account expect to reap the advantage of excuse or apology. We provoke God every day, and make no movement of returning to him ; and yet he bears with all long-suffering ; see you how great is the loving-kindness of the Lord. In this present outrage, the culprits have been apprehended,



thrown into prison, and punished; and yet we are in fear. He who has been insulted has not heard of what has been done, nor pronounced sentence; and we are all trembling. But God hears day by day the insults offered to him, and no one turns to him, although God is so kind and loving. With him it is enough to acknowledge the sin, and the guilt is absolved; . . . do you not hence conclude how unspeakable is the love of God, how boundless, how it surpasses all description. Here he who has been insulted is of the same nature with ourselves; only once in all his life has he been so treated, and that not to his face, not while he was present and seeing and hearing, and yet none of the offenders have been pardoned. But in the case of God, not one of these things can be said. For so vast is the distance between man and God, that no words can express it, and every day is he insulted while he is present, looking on and hearing; and yet he neither hurls thunder-bolts, nor bids the sea overflow the earth and drown all its inhabitants, nor commands the earth to yawn and swallow up all who have insulted him; but he forbears, and is long-suffering, and offers pardon to those by whom he has been outraged, if they only repent and promise to do so no more. Oh surely it is time to exclaim, Who can utter the mighty acts of the Lord? Who can show forth his praise?

¶ As to the friendly bishop, it is pleasing to know that he was well and kindly entertained by the emperor. He held a long intercourse with him, during which the old man reminded him of the example of his ancestor, Constantine, who, when his statue had been miserably abused, and its face battered and broken, passed his hand over his face, saying, "I do not feel myself bruised and broken, and my head and face seem sound and whole;" and then he used the better authority of Him who said, "If ye forgive men their trespasses," &c., &c.; and the emperor courteously entreated him; and then, with pardons in his possession, hastened his return back. The good old bishop, unable to travel very fast, forwarded the good news before him; and we learn how, when he entered the city, it was all ablaze with rejoicing lights; the forum decorated with garlands and flowers, and green boughs over all the shops and doors—quite a festive solemnity. And then the dear old bishop went to the church to give thanks; and in the place where, during his absence, Chrysostom had poured forth his jeremiads, he now, for the prosperous success of the undertaking, pronounced an oration full of gratulation and joy.

No doubt the behaviour of Chrysostom on this occasion, joined to his favourable eminence in opinion before, made him to be a man who could not be hid. In the year 398 he was consecrated and enthroned bishop of Constantinople. Ministers at the present day, who leave one charge or diocese for another,



are in no danger of creating such a turmoil as that caused by the rumour of the probable departure of Chrysostom from Antioch. The people could not tolerate the idea of the departure from their midst of their admired and eloquent preacher; nor did it appear that the preacher himself desired to remove, and, probably, had he known what circumstances were to come out of this consecration, the emperor himself would not have been so determined in his design. Fearing, however, a popular tumult, a letter was written to the governor of the province to manage the matter. He desired Chrysostom to walk a little way with him out of the town, decoyed him into his carriage, and drove him to the next stage beyond Antioch; there he was delivered into the custody of the officers of the government, sent by the emperor to receive him. The emperor had desired that his consecration should take place with circumstances of especial pomp and solemnity, and a convention of bishops was summoned to assist at it; and thus, by guile and craft, seldom needed in the history of the church for elevation to such dignity, the people of Antioch lost their pastor, and Chrysostom became a bishop. From this time he enters upon that course of events in his life which should commend him most to the notice of preachers and teachers. In the great metropolis of the East he became a great social reformer. His discourses are richly exemplary; vehemently lashing the vices of the city and the vices of the clergy. There had been, indeed, from the corrupt members of the church in Constantinople, considerable opposition to his elevation. Constantinople, then the chief city of the world, the seat of the empire of the East, the seat of the court, could not, of course, be supposed to be exempt from those sins especially peculiar to great cities. The preacher, among those of his own profession, and those who lived only to amuse, found and satirized "such as sold their voices to their bellies"—a very admirable description, by-the-by, of many a preacher and singer of succeeding times. Even Dean Milman has apparently judged Chrysostom somewhat coldly, because he carried into his public administration more of the manners of the ascetic than seemed politic in a position of such importance. Gibbon, of course, cannot be expected to sympathize with the man whose loud thunders against the scandals of the church, or the vices of the city, ere long brought him into immediate hostility with the indignations alike of the chiefs of church and state. It is probable that such a temper as that possessed by the vehement orator of St. Sophia was choleric; and in a state of affairs languishing beneath a plethora of ill-humours, he attempted too rapid a reform. The clergy were aroused, and

sought to traduce him to the people, but yet, the stainless grandeur of his own life, so sombre and solemn, gave more vivid brilliancy to his amazing orations. He soon found himself, however, the centre of an immense conspiracy, to which also the emperor and empress lent themselves. It is possible, as Milman very distinctly reasons, that he permitted himself to be too much influenced by the representations of his deacon, Serapion. Finally, however, he was cited to the celebrated Synod of the Oak; forty-six charges were preferred against him, which even the sceptical and sarcastic Gibbon, who never misses his opportunity for snubbing or sneering at a saint, says, may justly be considered as a fair and unexceptional panegyric; four times the citation was served upon the bishop by the representatives of the Council; he refused—as they considered, contumaciously—to intrust either his life or reputation in their hands. While the envenomed conclave was sitting, he continued preaching, surrounded himself by the bishops of his party, and remained himself intrepid and unmoved. As we read of these things, it is possible to move back, in imagination and thought, to those agitated days. We are able to read calmly until we remember that life and existence hung upon the decision of the Council; but amidst the troubles of his companions, some of whom were in tears, some unable to control or to confine their passion, humbly embracing and kissing his garments—"Brethren," said he, "sit down, and do not weep; "for me to live is Christ, and to die is gain;" and then followed those magnificent, immortal words, we presume not unknown to many of our readers; words falling from his lips while the sentence of banishment was just being pronounced:—

What can I fear? Will it be death? But you know that Christ is my life, and that I shall gain by death. Will it be exile? But the earth and all its fulness is the Lord's. Will it be the loss of wealth? But we brought nothing into the world, and can carry nothing out. Thus all the terrors of the world are contemptible in my eyes; and I smile at all its good things. Poverty I do not fear. Riches I do not sigh for. Death I do not shrink from; and life I do not desire, save only for the progress of your souls. But you know, my friends, the true cause of my fall. It is that I have not lined my house with rich tapestry. It is that I have not clothed me in robes of silk. It is that I have not flattered the effeminacy and sensuality of certain men, nor laid gold and silver at their feet. But why need I say more? Jezebel is raising her persecution, and Elias must fly; Herodias is taking her pleasure, and John must be bound with chains; the Egyptian wife tells



her lie, and Joseph must be thrust into prison. And so, if they banish me, I shall be like Elias; if they throw me in the mire, like Jeremiah; if they plunge me into the sea, like the prophet Jonah; if into the pit, like Daniel; if they stone me, it is Stephen that I shall resemble; John, the forerunner, if they cut off my head; Paul, if they beat me with stripes; Isaiah, if they saw me asunder.

The emperor was called upon to ratify the decree of deposition pronounced by the Council; and the too visible and manifest reflections on the empress in the passage we have just cited, very likely made it more easy to him to yield his sanction to the sentence. He was speedily arrested in quite another manner than that fashion in which he was hurried away to his stormy bishopric. He was conveyed through the city by an imperial messenger, and landed, after a short navigation, at the mouth of the Euxine. The people of the city were astounded. During the Council of the Oak, they had been comparatively mute and passive. His arrest roused the city to such a height of indignation as has not often, in such an instance, been crowned with a like success, even where its object has been devotion and enthusiasm to greatness and goodness, obvious to a corrupt court. Very likely, not a little was added to the intensity and wonder of the hour by the throb of an earthquake, which shook the city that very night; and while it created some ruin, seemed to be portentous of more. Even the empress fell on her knees before the emperor, and besought him to recall the saintly but audacious orator. She—who had certainly been involved deeply in the machinations against him, and no wonder, when it is remembered that she had not escaped either the satire or the vehemence of this Knox of the early church—now protested herself quite innocent of all the troubles which had come upon him, declaring how she honoured him, not only as her own bishop, but particularly as the person who had baptized her children. Round the palace, raged and roared the immense waves of popular commotion; it was manifest that the public safety could only be purchased by the return of the minister, and messengers were sent to hasten his return; and the historian of *The Decline and Fall* has, even without a sneer, recited how the shores of Europe and Asia were illuminated, and the Bosphorus crowded with boats, to the mouth of the Propontis, as the victorious people accompanied, with flaming torches, their archbishop from the port to the cathedral. He, indeed, with an inflexibility which, of course, was part of his character, was loath to yield to any prayers for his return until his innocence should be vindicated before a greater

synod than that by which he had been condemned, and his sentence legally reversed. But the people were impatient of delay, and the empress also sent to compliment him, declaring that his return to the city was more to her than the crown she wore; and, in approved oriental language, expressing how she had restored the head to the body, the pilot to the ship, the pastor to the flock. So he yielded, and was met on his way by multitudes of the people, singing hymns to God for his return. So they bore him to the cathedral, and no protest of his that he was under ecclesiastical censure, and had no right there was of any avail; they would have him ascend the bishop's throne and give his blessing and an extempore sermon, which has been lost, though some who heard it spoke of it as one of the most considerable of his life. We know little more of it than that he spoke till the people would allow him to speak no longer—borne down and overwhelmed by their acclamations. What men of might were the bishops of those distant days!

But auspicious as were the circumstances of the orator's return, no reader can be much surprised to find that they were not omens either of long-continued peace, or of a happy close to his career. He soon vexed the empress again. Her irritation against him in the days of the first persecution grew out of his sharp rebukes of court fashions. It soon seemed that he had even a stronger and more personal ground for rebuke as a Christian minister. A silver statue of the empress, Eudoxia, was to be solemnly erected; it was to be elevated on a porphyry pillar in the street, and not far from the spot where stood the Church of St. Sophia. Its elevation and inauguration were accompanied not only by many shoutings, dances, and extravagancies, but by certain loose sports and pastimes, very suitable to the idolatries of Manichæanism or semi-paganism. The provost of the city was a Manichæan, and therefore encouraged this kind of looseness. Chrysostom's speech rushed out instantly in an unwise blaze of vehement invective. If readers, quietly perusing these pages of church history, think that a milder course of expostulation would have been more wise, let it be conceded that Rome and the world were only just then emerging from paganism—these rites were of the very nature of paganism. In the latter years of the reign of paganism in the empire, emperors had demanded and received the blasphemy of an apotheosis. Assuredly, however, the preacher could have had little affection or respect for the woman herself. In one of his sermons at this period, he drew the character of an ill woman, affirming that no beast in the world, nor lion, nor dragon, is comparable to a bad woman; and he



enforced and illustrated this by many illustrations from Scripture: then, also, he turned the tables, and discoursed of the qualities, nature, and actions of good women. The empress was again roused to indignation. Again, from this circumstance, active machinations were formed against him; the persecution reached a considerable height; the clergy who sided with him were seized, beaten, wounded, and imprisoned; the waters of the baptistry, where he officiated, were stained with blood. Looked at from this point of view, we see that it was the strong and malignant action of paganism against a pure Christianity. At last, power used its utmost insolence. It was determined by the court, and that part of the church which sided with it, that he should again be deposed and banished. The city was in a strange agitation, when suddenly a fire broke out in his magnificent cathedral. The conflagration spread, and left no part of the stately fabric untouched; the triumphant flames rolled along the aisles, and some choice pieces of antiquity are now probably lost to us, as they perished in that great calamity, in which, however, neither man nor beast was injured. The most monstrous circumstance of all was, that Chrysostom was himself charged with setting fire to the church; his case was indeed hopeless; he had left it, he had bidden farewell to his deaconesses; he had, in fact, withdrawn from the friendly custody of his adherents, and was on his way, while his church was in flames, to the Asiatic shore. The charge, of course, was only one of the monstrous malignities of the time, vexing the heart, and increasing the agony of the persecuted man. After his surrender and departure in that ill night, he never saw Constantinople again. Henceforth he was a prisoner, wandering amidst places, if it were possible to find them, where his friends would not flock round him, to love and reverence. But his influence continued during his absence. From his solitary cell, among the mountains of the Caucasus, although another bishop had been enthroned in his place, he governed his church, almost the whole of the Eastern Church. As he entered towns and neighbourhoods—as when he came upon the frontiers of Cappadocia and Tauro-Cilesia—bishops, and monks, and holy women met him in great companies, thronging round him with tears, and saying, that it were better the sun should not shine in the heavens, than John should be silenced. He carried with him a wasted and painful frame; subject to many and greivous sicknesses, he wandered, shifting from place to place, regarding woods and rocks as his best security; and Tavernier, the traveller, tells of a town in Armenia, two miles from which,

in the midst of a plain, rises a rugged rock, in the which was a hewn chamber, and bed, table, and cupboard; and, after some several steps cut in the rock, a little gallery leading to another chamber; and the tradition of the Christians of that place in the time of Tavernier was that here the eloquent and saintly exile passed a hard winter. The Bishop of Rome, Innocent, wrote to him, assuring him of his affection, seeking thus to sustain him in his exile. This was towards the close of his course. It was necessary to destroy his influence, as well as to compel his exile. The soldiers were cruel to him, compelling him to travel, when his wasted frame could bear no toil, through violent rains and burning suns. At last they came to Comana, a town in Cappadocia; he was not permitted to lodge in the town, but hurried forward till they reached the oratory of St. Basil, five or six miles off. St. Basil had been Bishop of Comana, and died a martyr under Maximian. The legend says that, the night before, the martyr had appeared to St. Chrysostom and said, "Be of good cheer, brother, to-morrow we shall be together!" Moreover, the legend says the martyr had appeared to the bishop of the place, bidding him "provide for brother John on the morrow." When, therefore, Chrysostom reached the oratory, he requested of his guard that he might stay there, but they hurried him forward. They had not, however, gone more than three or four miles, when he became so ill that they were obliged to return. As soon as he entered, he called for the brethren to give him some clean, white raiment. He stripped himself, and having put on the clothing brought him, he received the sacrament from their hands, and then, having performed these last duties for himself, especially the former, indicative, we have often thought, of the saintly delicacy of his nature, he concluded with his favourite doxology, "Glory be to God for all things that happen!" sealed it with "Amen!" gently stretched himself out and died.

The secrecy with which he had been carried from place to place, and the lonely desert spot where he breathed his last, were unable to prevent an amazing throng of holy people from following him to his grave. He was buried in the same tomb with the martyr Basil, who had met him and told him to "be of good comfort." His long life was packed up into the small compass of fifty-two years. His remains were not allowed to rest in the obscure spot in which they were interred. When the Emperor Arcadius, and his wife Eudoxia, had passed away, and Theodosius the younger reigned, who had been baptized by the banished bishop, he was besought to permit the restoration of the venerable remains; the request was instantly granted. Once more, the



Bosphorus was alive and aglow on account of Chrysostom; but this time with a more melancholy pomp. As the body touched the shore, the young emperor and empress, accompanied by their sisters, approached the coffin; he kissed it; covered it with his imperial cloak, and implored forgiveness from Heaven for the wrongs his parents had inflicted on the holy ascetic; then the remains were carried to their final resting-place. Envy and malice had done their worst. The memory of the holy preacher has never needed a defender; the virulence and the vice of party and power cast him down in his own day, but even then, and ever after, his righteousness has shone forth as the light. It has been said, the works of Chrysostom are the study of a lifetime; they are voluminous—the tender bursts of his immortal eloquence; if, occasionally, they seem to verge towards inflation, they are, nevertheless, fine models of the way in which Christian rhetoric may reach its most passionate harangue and declamation; while, better still, his more calm and sober moods furnish wiser models of exposition than even the wonderful and manifold pages of Augustine. What can be finer, more rich in Gospel sweetness, and more elevated in pathos, than the following passage on

#### THE SALVATION OF THE THIEF?

Would you learn another most illustrious achievement of the cross, transcending all human thought? The closed gate of Paradise he has opened to-day; for to-day he has brought into it *the thief*. Two most sublime achievements these! He both opened Paradise and brought in the thief. He restored to him the primeval fatherland of man, he led him back to the ancestral city. "To-day shalt thou be with me," he says, "in Paradise." What sayest thou? Thou art crucified and fixed to the cross with nails, and dost thou promise Paradise? How wilt thou confer such a gift? Paul, indeed, says, "He was crucified in weakness:" but hear what follows, "yet he liveth," he says, "by the power of God;" and again, in another place, "my strength is made perfect in weakness. Wherefore, now on the cross," he says, "I promise that by this thou mayest know my power." The spectacle itself is sad: look not at what the cross is in itself, lest thou despair, but raise thine eye to the power of the Crucified, that thy countenance may gleam with the radiance of joy—for this end he shows to thee there his might.

For it was not when raising the dead, it was not when commanding the sea, it was not when chiding demons,—but when crucified, nailed to the tree, insulted, spit upon, railed at, mocked, tortured by all,—that he exerted his might in drawing to himself the sinful soul of *the thief*. See, on this side and that, the effulgence of his power. He shook creation, rent the rocks; and the heart of the *thief*, harder than rock, he made softer than wax. "To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise." What sayest thou? The cherubim and the flaming sword guard Paradise, and dost

thou promise admission there to the *thief*? Yea, is his reply, for I am the Lord of the cherubim, and I have the power of flame and hell, and life and death. And therefore, he says, "To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise." The moment these celestial powers behold their Lord, they will withdraw and give place.

Though no king would permit *a thief* or any one of his servants to occupy the same seat with him, and to ride thus into the city, yet our gracious Lord did it. For at his entrance into his holy fatherland, he brings in along with him the thief; not dishonouring Paradise with the feet of the thief—far be it from him—but rather in this way conferring on it honour. For it is the glory of Paradise to have such a Lord so full of power and love, as to be able to make *a thief* worthy of the joys of Paradise.

For when he called publicans and harlots into the kingdom, he did this not to dishonour the kingdom, but to confer on it the highest renown, and to show that the Lord of the kingdom is such as to be able to bestow on harlots and publicans an excellence so perfect, that they are seen to be worthy of the honours and gifts that are there.

As, therefore, we admire a physician, when we see those who are labouring under incurable diseases released from their maladies and restored to perfect health, so, beloved, admire Christ, and be astonished that, laying his hand on those that are afflicted with incurable maladies of the soul, he has power to deliver them from the evils under which they groan, and make those who have reached the utmost extremity of wickedness fit for the kingdom of heaven.

The eloquence of Chrysostom is of that rich order, both of expression and illustration, that, weighty and magnificent as it is, it becomes apprehensible by every order of mind.

How stirring it must have been, in the ancient church, in such an epoch, to have heard him break forth in the following exclamation, in which he contrasts the lamentations of the heathen over their dead, with the lights, and hymns, and sacramental service, with which the early Christians celebrated the obsequies of the departed.

Tell me what mean the bright shining torches? Do we not accompany the dead as brave warriors? What mean the hymns? Do we not praise God, and render thanks to him, that he hath now crowned the departed? that he hath freed him from his sufferings, and hath taken him from misery to himself? Consider what ye sing at that moment! "Return unto thy rest, O my soul; for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee." Again: "The Lord is on my side; I will not fear;" and again: "Thou art my hiding place, from the trouble which encompasseth me." (Ps. cxvi. 7; cxviii. 6; xxxii. 7.) Consider what these Psalms mean. But ye heed them not, and are drunken with grief. Or, regard the mourning of others, that ye may find therein consolation for your own. Ye say: "Return unto thy rest, O my

soul; for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee"! and yet ye weep. (Ps. xvi. 7.)

Sometimes with a startling, beautiful ingenuity he seized upon some little passing incident, and made it beautifully effective. Thus once, while he was preaching, they began to light the lamps, and he exclaimed:—

Let me beg you to arouse yourselves, and to put away that sluggishness of mind. But why do I say this? At the very time when I am setting forth before you the Scriptures, you are turning your eyes away from me, and fixing them upon the lamps, and upon the man who is lighting the lamps. Oh! of what a sluggish soul is this the mark, to leave the preacher and turn to him. I too am kindling the fire of the Scriptures: and upon my tongue there is burning a taper, the taper of sound doctrine. Greater is this light, and better, than the light that is yonder. For, unlike that man, it is no wick steeped in oil, that I am lighting up. I am rather inflaming souls, moistened with piety, by the desire of heavenly discourse.

In this age of gorgeous household architecture, when the saints in many a neighbourhood are content to dwell in their ceiled houses, while the House of the Lord lies waste, perhaps, some may read the following with pleasure:—

#### THE PALACE OF ABRAHAM.

Paul, when exhorting the rich not to be high-minded, taught them the way to guard against it. They were to examine the uncertain and treacherous nature of riches. Wherefore he said: "nor trust in uncertain riches." He is not rich, who possesseth much; but he who distributeth much. Abraham was rich, but loved not his wealth: he regarded not the house of this man, nor the substance of that man; but, going forth, he looked round for the stranger and the needy, that he might succour poverty; that he might entertain the wayfarer. He covered not his ceilings with gold, but fixing his tent near the oak, he was contented with the shade of its leaves. Yet so bright was his dwelling, that angels were not ashamed to tarry with him; for they sought not splendour of abode, but purity of soul. Let us, my beloved, imitate Abraham, and dispense our goods to those who are in need. Rudely prepared was his habitation, but more splendid than the halls of kings. No king ever entertained angels; but Abraham sitting under the oak, and having his tent pitched, was accounted worthy of that honour. Neither was he thus distinguished on account of the lowliness of his dwelling; but he enjoyed this gift, because of the purity of his soul, and the treasures therein deposited. Let us not then adorn our houses, but rather our souls. Is it not a disgrace thoughtlessly to adorn our walls with marble, but to neglect the necessities of our Christian brethren. Of what use to thee, O man! is thy palace? Canst thou take it up and depart with it? But thy soul thou canst take up entire,



and carry along with thee. Lo! now, that so great peril hath come upon us, let our palaces aid us; let them deliver us from the impending danger, but they cannot. And ye are my witnesses, who, leaving your palaces desolate and flying to the wilderness, shun them as snares and nets. Let riches now assist us; but the present is no season for them. If the influence of riches be insufficient to appease the anger of man, much less will be their power before the divine and implacable seat of judgment. If gold now availeth us nothing against an irritated and wrathful man, its power will entirely vanish before the displeasure of God, who needeth not gold. Let us build houses to dwell in, not to make of them a vain display. That which exceedeth our necessities is superfluous and useless. Bind on a sandal larger than thy foot, and thou wilt not be able to endure it. It will impede thy walking. Thus also a house greater than is necessary impedeth thy passage to heaven. Wouldst thou raise vast and splendid habitations? I forbid them not; but let them not be on earth. Build tabernacles in heaven,—tabernacles imperishable. Why ravest thou about transitory things, things which remain on earth? Nothing is more deceitful than wealth; to-day with thee, to-morrow against thee. It armeth on all sides the eyes of the envious. It is a hostile warrior in thine own tent, an enemy in thine own house; and ye, who possess it, are my witnesses, who in every mode are burying and concealing it.

The words and sermons of Chrysostom, like those of our own Reeves' or Brookes', are among the little historiettes which bring vividly before us the manners, and vices, and people of the cities in which he preached. One of his biographers says, that "the emperor, the commissioners, bishops, and prefects, "are by his genius preserved like pieces of seaweed in amber." And, running our eye down several passages, we could easily fill pages with illustrations of this; but our memoir of this illustrious father has already extended to too great a length, and we must close our quotations with a noble passage poured forth soon after his brief restoration to Constantinople:—

Blessed be the Lord! I said it when I departed. On my return, I repeat it: and I ceased not from saying it in my absence. You remember that on the last day I recalled to you the image of Job, and his words, "Blessed be the name of the Lord for ever." It is the pledge that I left with you as I was departing; it is the thanksgiving that I bring back to you. The situations are different. The hymn of gratitude is the same. In exile I was always blessing. Returned from exile I am blessing still. Winter and summer work to the same end, the fertility of the earth. Blessed be God who allowed me to go forth: blessed again and again, in that he has called me back to you. Blessed be God who unchains the tempest: blessed be God who stills it; and has made a calm. . . . Through all the diversity of time the temper of the soul is the same; and the pilot's courage has been neither relaxed by the calm, nor overwhelmed by the tempest. . . . See

what the snares of my enemies have done; they have increased affection, and kindled regret for me, and have won me six hundred admirers. At other times it is our own body alone who love me. To-day the very Jews do me honour . . . it is not the enemies that I thank for their change of mind, but God, who has turned their injustice to my honour. The Jews crucified the Lord and the world is saved; yet it is not the Jews that I thank, but the Crucified. May they see that which our God sees; the peace, the glory that their snares have been worth to me. At other times the church alone used to be filled. Now the public square is become the church. All heads are as immovable as if they were one. All are silent, though no one orders silence. All are contrite, too. There are games in the Circus to-day: but no one assists at them. All flow to the temple like a torrent. The torrent is your multitude. The river's murmur is your voices, that rise up to heaven, and tell of the love you bear to your Father. Your prayers are to me a brighter crown than all the diadems of earth.

On the whole, none of the great names of those early ecclesiastical ages wins from us more admiration and affection than that of this illustrious man. Great as he was as an orator, he shines not merely by the splendours of his rhetoric; indeed, he steadily resisted the growing, and too prevalent idea, that the Christian teacher should be a mere orator. He reproved the growing error of his times, a passion for public discourses, and the disposition of auditors, as he says, "to conduct themselves like spectators at the heathen games." He constantly reproved the disposition to applaud, and frequently, when it broke forth in homage to himself, he exclaimed, "The church is not a theatre in which we should listen to be amused; of what avail to me are those shouts—this applause, this tumult? The praise I seek is, that you show forth in your works the things I have spoken to you." Applause in the church, very common in his day, he strongly denounced as transferring to that hallowed place the laws of the theatre. He set a very high standard for the Christian minister: "Let him," said he, "not approach the pulpit who can neither combat the enemies of our faith, nor bring every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ, nor cast down vain imaginations." When he spoke of the preachers in his time as "going about rather after the fashion of harlots, to seek the favour of the people, than to instruct them," it is not surprising that rebuke so vehement and indignant brought down upon his head the condemnation of his own holiness. Immense as was his power while living, and greater still and more extensive as his fame has been since his death, Chrysostom does not flatter the theory of those who demand



a grand and imposing figure for the loftiest oratory. He was low of stature; his head was big, but entirely bald; his forehead large and full of wrinkles; still more singular, his eyes were not prominent but deep-set, sunk inwards, though they are described as amiable and affectionate, nor does his manner seem to be that of which we speak as the "flood of eloquence"—it was the grandeur of expression, the holiness and purity of conception, united, of course, to voice a of considerable flexibility and strength of tone;—nor does he seem to have attempted to inflame the people by much action. *Distinctness*, we gather to have been a power with him, and in the old church, either of Antioch or Constantinople, we do not find it difficult to conceive the quiet grace of his manner expressing the delightful and graceful graciousness of many a paragraph, or the fore-finger of the right hand elevated till it clenched the argument; or, as was more common with him, expressed some vehement and indignant sentence by pressing it on the palm of the left hand. He had, as is abundantly shown, great copiousness and plenty of words, infinite sweetness, and an impetus of soul and nervous efficacy which gave material strength to all his speech. Thus, in every point of view, he compels our attention; we feel that we are not merely with a man great in his own hour, or age, or city. He had, in a very eminent degree, the talents of facility conjoined to perspicuity. We could trust him not merely when a multitude has to be commanded, but when a text has to be elucidated. Meantime, he also had, in a very eminent degree, that profound intensity of character, which, we are persuaded, is the root of all truest oratory, which itself is the organ of faith, and which, as in this illustrious instance, makes the life a high and noble consistency. Writers have, ere now, compared Augustine to St. John, Chrysostom to St. Paul; the correctness of the comparison is not, at first sight, most distinctly recognised; yet the more we look upon the men, the more we see this is their order; and much in the history of the mind and life of Chrysostom suggests comparison with him whose writings he most dearly loved and closely studied. Of course, we must not push the comparison too far; Paul was an infinite man. We have said already Chrysostom is the study of a lifetime; our knowledge of his life and works is sufficient for the compilation of this brief, and we trust not unuseful paper, from popular sources. Those of our readers who desire to know more may consult the Paris edition of Bernard Montfaucon, a Benedictine monk, in thirteen folio volumes. There is another, the Eton Saville edition, in eight folio volumes. We mention these rather to justify our expression that this great father would take a life to know him well.



## II.

## HENRY EDWARD, ARCHBISHOP, ETC., ETC.\*

**H**ENRY EDWARD is not long in putting forth, with all due pomp of circumstance, the proclamation of his archprelatical importance. Since his retreat from the confusions of the church of his birth, and nearly education, into the innocent and harmonious church of his adoption, his pen has become remarkably prolific. As an archdeacon of the English Church, we only possess little more than those volumes of matchless sermons which involved no especial labour of the pen, however much of the life; but within the last few years pamphlets, lectures, and volumes have teemed in successive litters from the subtle brain and the quick fingers of the man—if, indeed, we do not err and blaspheme in ascribing that vulgar epithet, man, to such an illustrious member of so illustrious a hierarchy, exempted, we believe, by the Holy Ghost, from all the inferior conditions of human mortals. The volume before us reminds us again that our beloved old teacher, confessor, and friend, Archdeacon Manning, is dead, buried, and done with, save so far as those volumes of a deceased and beautiful preacher have power to reach us. It is a painful and a difficult thing to attempt to realize in the bitter malignity, the immense and emblazoned falsehoods, the sinuous tergiversations of His Eminence the Archbishop of Westminster, the deep, calm, spiritual insight, the clear, tender, affectionate pity for sinners, the high, hopeful, and helpful consolation for holy and suffering souls, of the Archdeacon of Chichester. We shall not attempt to realize the one in the other. We dare say Henry Edward, Archbishop of Westminster, does not desire to live in any of those listenings and sympathies which ponder the pages of the deceased Dr. Manning. It is with a feeling of pride and joy that we refer to what he was in the Church of England, as compared with what he is in the Church of Rome. The difference is as great as between one of the martyrs of the English Church and an arch-inquisitor of the Romish; is as great as between the spirits of Richard Hooker or Jeremy Taylor, and holy St. Dominic. The English Church assuredly had the best of him, if consolation in Christ, comforts in love, fellowship of

\* *The Temporal Mission of the Holy Ghost; or, Reason and Revelation.* By Henry Edward, Archbishop of Westminster. Longmans.

the spirit, tenderness, and mercies, are to be regarded as the best of a man. Dying to the English Church, the world lost sight of him for a season, until, in the resurrection, we behold indeed another, if the same; and we should say that Henry Edward, Archbishop of Westminster, has graduated and taken very high honours now in that university which confers upon its disciples the gifts and graces of wrath, and malice, and clamour, and evil speaking, and such like. Over the remains of Henry Edward Manning we express our most affectionate, and grateful, and reverential regrets; for the man wrapped in his haberdashery at Westminster, proud and bitter, we believe, to the very measure of a demon; sly, and subtle, and servile; with the dangerous littleness of a viper, and the immense and fearful coil of a constrictor,—we can only measure out for his scorn and his craft a due amount of agile wariness, anticipation, and hostility.

This pleasant little brochure, *The Temporal Mission of the Holy Ghost*, is full of mental ability—fearful mental ability. The priestly mind of its author has so plaited together the mailed links of infinite truth and error that no doubt many who read the work, even Protestant minds, will regard the whole as a perfect breastplate of mail over the Papacy, and fail to distinguish the vulnerable and weak places of the armour: of course, it has all its author's audacity of statement and claim. So much for what makes the book worthy of that measure of respect which every literary performance, according to its merits, has a right to demand. But it is impossible, also, not to notice certain traits which to us are disgusting. The gentleman "protests too much." Most of Dr. Manning's later little effusions had had the stamp of an archcolloguer upon them—indications of a servile determination to be on good terms with the court of Rome. From time to time, we have heard of him whispering in the ear of the Pope at the Vatican, lecturing in Rome; from time to time have emanated from the press his little documents, which seem to assume, not that Protestants and Papists were two parties, Protestantism and Romanism two facts, but rather that in the world of to-day there was but one party, one fact, one principle—the Papacy. In the work before us, down upon all fours, flat as a flounder, falls the Archbishop, confesses the sins of his writings when he was an English archdeacon, recalcitrates and retracts his errors and heresies, humbly kisses the Pope's toe, and, in fact, to our thinking, goes through a set of servile movements, the continuation of those which procured him the archbishop's mitre, and which, perpetuated in the rich, thick inlaying of rouge in the present volume, will not only continue to suggest, but most likely



confirm his claim, to the red hat and stockings of the cardinal.

We are not certain that all our readers will at once apprehend what the author means by the temporal mission of the Holy Ghost. We had supposed, before we read his own definition, that he might intend by it the relation the third Divine Person bears to the more merely human and visible conditions of church existence and history; it is not so; by it, it seems, Roman Catholic theologians intend the office of the Holy Ghost as "distinct from his eternal procession and spiration from the Father and the Son." It is, therefore, the consideration "of the sending, advent, and office of the Holy Ghost through the Incarnate Son after the day of Pentecost." This temporal mission, our readers now will see, opens up a train of thought, in which the author considers the relation of the Holy Ghost to the church, to the human reason, to the letter of Scripture, to the interpretation of Scripture, and to the divine tradition of the faith. We, whose theologic knowledge is as inferior to Dr. Manning's immense attainments in that direction as is possible for those, who have not had the advantage with him of exactly knowing what the mind of the Holy Ghost has been from eternity, have been in the habit, to quote our author's phrase, of *comprehending certain fruits of the Spirit*, among others, love and meekness, *in the temporal mission of the Holy Ghost*; but these are matters altogether beneath the notice of that eminent person, Henry Edward, Archbishop of Westminster. So far from cultivating those graces, he, in a most flagrant and daring manner, libels the faith of all Protestant Christendom, by impudently and arrogantly affirming that *the rejection of the perpetual infallibility of the Romish Church is the rejection of the perpetual office of the Holy Ghost in the church! and involves, not merely this, but the rejection at once of his temporal mission and his eternal procession!* Such honest and truthful people are these Popish archbishops. We dare say he could equivocate his meaning into a plausibility; but it would still remain not the less a lie.

Our readers have not gathered from our remarks upon this new volume that we are insensible to a certain, and even considerable value in it. Who can be insensible to the clear incisive style in which the author makes his words cut sharp and distinctly as a diamond? Who can fail even to admire that searchingness of glance, which, in the old days, seemed to us to amount to deep spiritual vision, and which now is of eminent value to us as indicating the clearest views of an unusual intellect upon the hostile points of an argument? But we shall

very honestly say that we are not very much concerned to set before our readers those matters of this volume which would commend themselves either to us or to our readers. We fasten rather upon its points of implacability and malignity, upon its, to us, most marvellous one-sidedness, we even think, notwithstanding what we have said above, its short-sightedness; for Dr. Manning, while he is a perfect master of logical fence, a perfect knight in those dialectic tournaments which have tested the prowess of Occam, Erigena, and Aquinas, and has an eye of wonderful prescience for all points that could either flaw or fill out an argument, does not, we fancy, know much of society. Priests of his order seldom do. We could not forbear a burst of scornful laughter as we came, the other day, in reading this delectable volume, to that passage in which he mourns over the impiety of England, and in the very same breath lifts up a loud *Te-Deum* triumph over the holiness of France! These things are wonderfully consolatory to us. Blind as bats, obtuse as owls, are these Papistical gentry over the impieties, the social depravities of any countries which profess and call themselves catholic. Oh! Monseigneur, the Archbishop! what do you think of the Italian Boulevards on a Sunday evening? or the Bois de Boulogne on a Sunday afternoon? Or, if these things seem, as perhaps they do seem, amiable to you, what do you think of certain very well understood, but not very mentionable, moral characteristics of Paris? "France has risen again from the dead, and Christianity, and the Church in France is restored to all its power and purity"! And France has favoured us with the vile and heartless romance of M. Renan, and the utterly debasing naturalism of M. Comte, and inundates the world with the vilest novels. All the world knows with what *French novel* is synonymous. We do not depreciate womanhood in the church, assuredly; but what piety there is in France is pretty exclusively that of its women. The manhood of France may be described as utterly infidel. This is that to which this pious author desires to restore our beloved land; in truth, we are bad enough as a nation, we believe—plenty of room to amend, we are very certain—but in our desire for improvement, we shall not be disposed to study either the social or the religious life of any of the cities or nations which the Papacy claims as its own. He gives to France the honour of a large, apparently an unlimited, possession of faith. "What has saved France but the Church of God—the supernatural witness, endowments, and power of the Holy Catholic and Roman Church? But what shall save England from the unbelief which is impending as an inundation?" Assuredly, we have



had no very clear idea that France has been saved. The Roman Catholic Church has been the chief religious power in France, certainly from the days of the first Napoleon. Since our boyhood, she has undergone three revolutions, and if, at present, she seems to have ascended to much material prosperity, she lags a long way behind England in this, as in the more majestic attributes of self-government and repose. We dare say there is a great deal of infidelity—growing infidelity—in our midst; but Archbishop Manning talks childish nonsense when he would have us envy and emulate the faith and piety of France. We should say to him simply and concisely, had we the opportunity, “Dr., you don’t know of what you are talking; you neither know France nor England, and we take your opacity of vision in this matter to be only symbolic of a like opacity in many and innumerable particulars.” The book, in many ways, moves us to smiles of scorn; it is impossible to forbear, the statements are so egregious. Here, for instance:—

I am not denying the existence of error and corruption in Christendom. There has been enough of all kinds in every age; but they have been the errors and corruptions of individuals, *not of the Church*. They have existed within the Church till the Church cast them out. *They never fastened upon the Divine tradition of dogma, nor mingled themselves in the Divine utterances or enunciations of the doctrines of faith.* The errors of individuals cannot prevail against the Church. Individuals depend on the Church, not the Church on individuals. The Church depends on its Divine Head, and upon the perpetual presence of the Divine Person who inhabits it.

Of course, we know how men like Dr. Manning would sublimely sneer upon us if we asked them what they thought of the horrible and enormous wickedness of those “*divine persons*”—the Alexanders, Juliuses, Leos. “*Divine persons!*” These *divine persons* are in eternal perplexity. No sophistry can ever set aside the perplexity, no tergiversation, no clever manipulation of documents can ever set aside facts as patent on the pens of Papal as of Protestant historians. Very few of the criminals decorating the gallows of Newgate, or the pages of the *Newgate Calendar*, have reached the enormity of multitudes of these *divine persons*. Say they are mere temporal princes, cardinals who happened to attain the tiara, and we will not push even our argument too cruelly; but, “*divine persons*, indeed! A number of these *divine persons* were, like John XXII., arch-heretics. Yet this was his most innocent crime. *Divine persons!* The list of the Popes scarcely furnishes a name that can command affection or reverence. One of the most lovely, the weak hermit,

Celestin, who really seemed to have some of "the fruits of the Spirit" in his life, had, after his brief pontificate, to yield to the unbounded craft of Boniface VIII., and, after bitter and cruel persecution, died in prison. *Divine persons!* Sixtus IV.! Alexander VI.! Julius II! Clement VII.! *Divine persons!* The only ones that look to us at all divine are the few who were insulted, dethroned, imprisoned, banished, or murdered. We know all this has been said a million times, and we know that some at the present day affect pityingly to admire the present quiet old man in Rome. We have no such pity nor admiration to spare; fools are they who have. To us, the *divine person* seems only a toothless old Archimago, champing his antique gums with an imbecile will, regretting the time when his ancestors were able to extinguish the lives or damn the souls of their opponents, while they threw down their torches on the altar steps of the church, or embroiled nations, or summoned armies and stakes to hurl back humanity and civilization. *Divine persons*, indeed! with the page of history open before us, we say—a heap of rubbish!

So that pagan, *Leo the Tenth*, was a "*Divine person!*" True, he was not the church, is the clever distinction of Dr. Manning and his sophistical logic; but he and his school of pagans drenched all Europe with the loathsome vilenesses of the Renaissance, bringing back again to Europe all the forms of a dead paganism, and, in fact, giving existence to Luther and all the children of the Reformation. Archbishop Manning says, "God has reformed the church by its pontiffs and its councils." When? In what age? In what particulars? We look along that wildering and bewildered sea, in which the ship of the Papacy rides like a mysterious phantom-ship, ever looming luridly through the tempest, now like a magnificent and bedizened yacht of sovereigns and princes, and now like a broken and blasted hull of a wrecked or stranded vessel; always ambitious, quarrelsome—an Amazon on the waters; now boarding the ships of kings, and now scuttling the smaller boats; always ready for any privateering or piracy. But the Church of the pontiffs as a reformer is quite a new idea to us. Yet our author says:—

My purpose is to show that the confusions, contentions, and spiritual miseries which have fallen upon England, and which afflict us all both in public and in private, have come from the pretension of reforming the Church of God. And to do so, it will be enough to show, that God has so provided for His Church as to render such a reformation not only needless but impossible.



And again, the spirit of the author may be read in the following passage, in which he draws an analogy between the rise of Christianity after the persecutions and martyrdoms in the Roman Empire, and the restoration of Romanism to England now; it is a very favourable specimen of the author's audacity of style:—

But before I enter upon this point I am irresistibly drawn to say a few words on the analogy between the Church in Rome in the fourth century, and in England in the present.

For three hundred years the mightiest empire the world ever saw strove with all its power to drive the Church of God from off the face of the earth. All that force could do was tried, and tried in vain. The Church withdrew itself, but was still visible. It worshipped in catacombs, but bore its witness by martyrdom. When the storm was over-past, it ascended from the windings of the catacombs to worship in the basilicas of the empire. It must have been a day full of supernatural joy, a resurrection from the grave, when the Christians of Rome met each other in the streets of the city by the light of the noon-day sun. In those three hundred years a change altogether divine had passed upon the empire. The world from which the Church withdrew itself was compact, massive, irresistible in its material power, its gross paganism, and its profound immorality. The world which met the gaze of the Church at its rising was altogether changed. Christianity had penetrated on every side. It was in all its provinces, in all its cities, in Rome above all, in its legions, and in its fleets, in the forum, in the senate, and in the palace of the Cæsars. The heathen world was dissolving and passing away by the two-fold action of an internal disintegration, and of the expansion of the light of faith. The outlines of the Christian world were already traced upon the earth, and its rudiments were rising into visible unity and order. The image of the city of God hovered above the tumults and confusions of mankind, awaiting the time when the Divine will should clear from the circuit of the Roman world that which hindered its peaceful possession.

Like to this in many ways is the change which is now before our eyes. *I pass by the history of wrongs and sufferings which are now no more.* It is a grievous and fearful tale, to be forgotten, if it may. Let us turn to brighter things. *For three hundred years the Church in England has worshipped in secret, withdrawn from the sight of man.* After all its wounds it lived on, a vigorous and imperishable life, and came forth once more, ascending from the catacombs to offer the Holy Sacrifice in stately sanctuaries and the light of noon.

It is now thirty years since it rose again from its hiding-place; and the world which meets its view is far other than the world which drove it before its face. It sees no more the whole people of England, under a dominant hierarchy, armed with the power of law to persecute even to death the priest who offers the holy sacrifice, and to force an outward uniformity upon the whole population. It does not any longer see the

Anglican Church sole and exclusive in its privileges, and asserting the authority over the English people. The days of its supremacy are long gone. England is now in the possession of a multitude of sects among which the Church of the Reformation finds its place and its kindred as one among many, richer and more favoured by the higher classes, but content with its wealth and place, and the toleration which it shares with others.

There are signs upon the horizon over the sea. *Protestantism is gone in Germany. The old forms of religious thought are passing away. They are going in England.* Separation has generated separation. The rejection of the Divine Voice has let in the flood of opinion, and opinion has generated scepticism, and scepticism has brought on contentions without an end. What seemed so solid once is disintegrated now. It is dissolving by the internal action of the principle from which it sprung. The critical unbelief of dogma has now reached to the foundation of Christianity, and to the veracity of Scripture. Such is the world the Catholic Church sees before it at this day. The Anglicanism of the Reformation is upon the rocks, like some tall ship stranded upon the shore, and going to pieces by its own weight and the steady action of the sea. *We have no need of playing the wreckers. It would be inhumanity to do so. God knows that the desires and prayers of Catholics are ever ascending that all which remains of Christianity in England may be preserved, unfolded and perfected into the whole circle of revealed truths and the un mutilated revelation of the faith.* It is inevitable that if we speak plainly we must give pain and offence to those who will not admit the possibility that they are out of the faith and Church of Jesus Christ. But if we do not speak plainly, woe unto us, for we shall betray our trust and our Master. There is a day coming when they who have softened down the truth, or have been silent, will have to give account. I had rather be thought harsh than be conscious of hiding the light which has been mercifully shown to me. If I speak uncharitably let me be told in what words. I will make open reparation if I be found in fault.

We are so accustomed to the insolence of Papists that we really ought to preserve our minds in a more equal and undignified balance than we fear our readers will give us credit for, as they read our remarks on this book; and, indeed, so long as Dr. Manning and his co-religionists are simply amusingly insolent we laugh; when he tells us that "to say that Christianity is Catholicism, and Catholicism is Christianity, is to utter a truism," &c.; when he reminds us that the essential condition of Protestantism is rationalism, and that "by rationalism" he "always intends an abnormal and illegitimate use of the reason," we can afford to smile with pity. The man might just as well say that the temporal mission of the Holy Ghost was to provide men with spectacles, and that to attempt to see without them



was an abnormal and illegitimate use of the human eyes. Such teaching insults God, since it makes him the father of falsehood. Whoever scorns the human reason in its own highest and most balanced teachings, scorns the witness God has put for himself within the human breast. And what does Dr. Manning mean? In some sense he also uses his own reason—what little of it Romanism has left him. It seems Scripture difficulties strike him, and, in the 166, 167 pages of this book, he looks at them, and reasons them down after the very fashion of a human reason weighing evidences. There are perplexities in the letter of Scripture,—in its numbers and its chronology; what then? Says he, "I leave these as residual difficulties. There are residual difficulties in science—phenomena we cannot reconcile with scientific principles; but I know what the principles are, and the irreconcilable phenomena do not disturb my impressions and my knowledge; so the residual difficulties of Scripture sink into nothing before the overwhelming weight of moral evidence." Here is his reasoning—it is the very method of a devout Protestant or rationalist:—

Historical narratives may appear incredible and yet be true; and may seem irreconcilable with other history, and yet the difficulty may arise simply from our want of adequate knowledge. A history may seem improbable, and yet be fact after all.

*The most certain and exact sciences have residual difficulties which resist all tests, and refuse all solution.* The sciences most within our reach, of the natural order, and capable of demonstration, not only have their limits, but also phenomena which we cannot reconcile. How much more Revelation, which reaches into a world of which eternity and infinity are conditions, and belongs to an order above nature and the reason of man! It is no wonder that in the sphere of supernatural science there should be residual difficulties, such as the origin of evil, the freedom of the will, the eternity of punishment. They lie upon the frontier, beyond which, in this world, we shall never pass. Again, what wonder that the Holy Scriptures should contain difficulties which yield to no criticism, and that not only in the sphere of supernatural truth, but also of the natural order—that is, of history, chronology, and the like! To hear some men talk, one would suppose that they were eye-witnesses of the creation, observers of the earth's surface before and after the Flood, companions of the patriarchs, chroniclers of the Jewish race. The history of the world for four thousand years, written in mere outline, with intervals of unmarked duration—genealogies which cannot be verified by any other record, events which are the *ᾠπαξ λεγόμενα* of history—may well present difficulties, and apparent improbabilities upon the surface, and yet after all be true. The same historical event, viewed from different sides, will present aspects so different, that the records of it may be apparently irreconcilable; and yet some one fact or event not



preserved in the record would solve and harmonise all. It may be from "intellectual obtuseness," or "want of the critical faculty," or "obstinate adherence to preconceived belief," but it makes little impression on me to be told that S. Stephen, in Acts vii. 16, fell into an historical error in saying that Jacob was buried in Sichem. I confess that I cannot explain the difficulty, and that the explanations usually given, though possible and even probable, are hardly sufficient. Nevertheless, I am not shaken in the least as to the divine axiom, that Holy Scripture is exempt from all error. Whether it be a fault in the manuscript, or in the translator, or only a want of our understanding, I cannot tell; but an error in Scripture most assuredly it is not, and our inability to solve it, is no proof that it is. There it stands, an undoubted difficulty in the existing text—and not the only one; and yet all together will not shake our faith in the immunity from error which was granted to the sacred writers.

Nor, again, when we read in one place that King Solomon had 4000 stalls for horses, in another 40,000; nor that king Josias began to reign at eight years of age, in another place at eighteen. I cannot explain it. But I can imagine and believe many solutions except one, namely, that the inspired writers contradicted themselves, or that in this they were not inspired.

So likewise, when I am told that the history of the Pentateuch is intrinsically incredible;—that half a million of men could not be slain in one battle: that the people in the wilderness could not have survived without water; that to furnish the paschal lambs would require I know not how many millions of sheep; that, according to sheep-masters, in Yorkshire and Natal, this would require I know not how many millions of square acres of grass; that the priest could not carry every day a bullock, with his head, and hide, and inwards, and appurtenances, six miles out of the camp, and the like;—I confess that it makes little impression on me. It reminds me of the Athenian, who having a house to sell, carried about a brick in his pocket as a view of the premises; and of another, who showed in his olive garden the well out of which his forefathers used to drink; to which his friend—testing history by mensuration, and yet believing—said, "What long necks they must have had!" I do not profess to be able to understand all the difficulties which may be raised. The history shows to me afar off like the harvest-moon just over the horizon, dilated beyond all proportion, and in its aspect unnatural; but I know it to be the same heavenly light which in a few hours I shall see in a flood of splendour, self-evident and without a cloud.

The noticing of this book has not been a gracious task hitherto. We regard Dr. Manning as incomparably the most dangerous man at present in our country connected with his hierarchy; a remorseless, unconscientious, crafty intelligence, evidently illustrating now that all those words of tenderness in his sermons of old were the speeches of a perfectly artistic, heartless intellect; the man never had a feeling. Our readers

may recur to the impudence of that passage we have quoted, in which, speaking of Romanism in England, its present and its past, he modestly signifies *his intention of passing by the history of wrongs and sufferings which are now no more!* It is vain to argue. If Papists were ever persecuted in this country—if Protestantism ever became a persecutor, it was only by applying lessons received from Rome.

Among the amusing things we notice in this entertaining book, is Dr. Manning's idea of "the river of water of Life." He tells us "that the Benedictine, Dominican, Franciscan, and the "Jesuit"—these pleasant sectaries—seem to him, Dr. Manning, "like the four rivers of Paradise, watering the church "of God." "No communion or body," he says, "separated "from the Catholic and Roman Church, has ever produced "any exhibition of the mind and character of Jesus, or the "moral and spiritual idea of Christianity, I will not say equal "in proportion or in fulness, but so much as like in kind as "that which has emanated from these processions of saints." What are we to think? Dr. Southey, by no means a bitter anti-Papist, says of St. Dominic, "He is the only saint in whom no "solitary spark of goodness can be discovered; to impose "privations and pain seems to have been the pleasure of his "unnatural heart, and cruelty was in him an appetite and a "passion. No other human being has ever been the occasion "of so much human misery; the desolations committed by "Attila or Timur shrink into insignificance when compared "with the achievements of the Inquisition." This is one of Dr. Manning's rivers of Paradise, and to which he does not hesitate—as it seems to us almost blasphemously—to apply the holy text, "There is a river, the streams of which make glad "the city of our God"! For St. Francis and the gentle Benedictines we do confess to many affectionate regards; but Dominic we know, and Ignatius we know, but what are we to think of Dr. Manning? and with his admiration of the achievements of the Inquisition, what would he regard as the temporal mission of the Holy Ghost, if he had power to use the civil sword as his ancestral archbishops used it of old?

But we close this department of our notice of the book. A professed defence of the truth of the sacred writings, and the reality of the mission of the Holy Ghost to our world, Dr. Manning has so constructed his volume, that its offensive spirit and rude sectarianism become more remarkable than its argumentative vigour and eloquence; yet it is, of course, wanting in neither of these attributes; but, as we have said, he has so plaited his argument, that the heresies of his Church are intended by him

to gain equally with Divine truths. *Protestantism* is quite a convertible term with him with *infidelity*. Of course, *the church* is a convertible term with *the Papacy*. His argument, if it prove anything, proves that it would be more desirable for the Bible to perish than the Papacy. The Church of the Papacy existed anterior to the Scriptures; Dr. Manning, we presume, means *that*—of course he means *that*. The Holy Ghost resides, he says, absolutely in the church, that is, in the Church of the Papacy. He says, “*We neither derive our religion from the Scriptures, nor does it depend upon them.*” We quite believe him; this has often been said, never more boldly, clearly, and distinctly. “*Our faith was in the world before the New Testament was written.*” Of this, we have no doubt either. The chief parts of that faith existed before the age of the New Testament among the gods and temples of Rome, and, where they may still be found, in the Brahminism of India, and the Buddhism and Lamaism of China and Japan. Dr. Manning is, therefore, much more concerned for his Church than for the Bible, and his argument for the personality of the Holy Ghost turns, by its application, into an argument for the poor old Pope. He sets his spear in rest against infidelity, but it is with the intention of pinning Protestantism itself to the wall. This is the sum of the whole argument:—

Now these four truths, as I take leave to call them,—first, that it is a violation of reason not to believe in the existence of God; secondly, that it is a violation of our moral sense not to believe that God has made Himself known to man; thirdly, that the revelation He has given is Christianity; and, fourthly, that Christianity is Catholicism.

It is impossible any longer to smile at the old Puritan New Englander in the well-known story:—“Resolved, First: ‘The earth is the Lord’s and the fulness thereof.’ Second, resolved: The Lord hath given the earth to the inheritance of his saints. Resolved: Third, *We are the saints!*” This is Dr. Manning’s conclusion. Christianity is Catholicism; Here, he says, Christianity is in its perfection and its purity, unmutilated, full in its orb and circumference. To us it seems a mere play of child’s words, a mere desire to piece together a broken toy. God forbid, that sane and sensible Christian Englishmen and Englishwomen should ever exchange their idea of the true spiritual unity of the believing church, for that which Papists call its organic unity! The thing is to us as inconceivable as it is undesirable. There is no life of the Holy Ghost, says Dr. Manning, in Protestant sects, for look at their variety and see how fragmentary are many. He might as well say, there is no organic



unity, no real vitality in nature because of the varieties of its trees, and the manifold shapes of its creatures. We are no more startled by the manifold operations of the same Spirit in the divine life of the church, than we are in the kingdoms of nature. We judge the one to be a *uni-verse* as well as the other. In this way we feel that any good there may be in Dr. Manning's work has a flaw and fault in it; and yet, in parting from it, we say again, we are not insensible to the value of many hints and portions of the argument. But, as certainly as Dr. Manning, we also are able to feel that the difficulties of Scripture are no barrier to our faithful reception of it as the Book of God. He presumes to think that only as his Church puts the volume into the hands of the believer can it be received as the Word of God; and when we tell him that we pay it the same homage, and that millions of poor peasant women in the world, and world-weary men, receive it with the same, or more, awful reverence—if he shall ask, Why? and we reply to him, Because the whole book is such an unaccountable blessedness, in spite of many apparent contradictions, difficulties of numbers, difficulties of geography, apparent difficulties of science, it goes right home to the conscience at once to comfort, enlighten, and reprove:—if, then, Dr. Manning scornfully taunt us, and say, Ah, the old story of the verifying faculty!—we boldly ask him which challenges the deepest and the highest faith, the book locked up in a shrine, written in an unknown tongue, hasped and padlocked in gold, to which the priest points the millions of the multitudes, saying, "Look and believe," but dare not touch,—or the open volume which all may read who can, which lies open and well-thumbed by the fingers of generations; in whose pages, if infidelity find occasion for its carping, faith finds from age to age its food? We say there is no comparison between the two; the mission of the Holy Ghost is promised in answer to the prayers of all humble believers; and the argument of Dr. Manning, instead of being a demonstration of the presence of the Holy Ghost in the Scriptures and in the church, is only to us an elaborate sophism of logic for the purpose of showing how impossible it is to lean with faith on what the Holy Ghost is, or what Scripture says, without the intervention, guardianship, and dictation of that priesthood, which certainly neither by history in the past, nor observation in the present, seems to us to present any of those outward and visible signs by which we usually mark the extraordinary indwelling of the ineffable and spiritual grace.

## III.

## CHURCH HISTORY.\*

THESE are gorgeous books, but, as with much intellectual delight we read them—and especially as we read *The History of Latin Christianity*—something within us protests that, although written by a clergyman so eminent as Dean Milman, they present an incomplete and quite inadequate picture of the church and Christianity. The very extensive research, and the patient labour, and the splendid hagiographic groupings, like long processions winding through nave and chancel, by the altar's foot, through quaint old middle age cities, up palace stairs, and through statesmen's chambers, with which the work abounds, command our highest appreciation. There is no work like Dr. Milman's, nor in any sense approaching it in our language—and even it only professes to give a portion of the stirring and enchanting picture—nor do we very well know to whom, in either French or German, we could refer for its like. Of course, America has neither the age nor facilities for the production of such a story. It needs the ancient sympathies, and with these the ready access to our wonderful English and European libraries, and the repose not merely of a gentleman, but of a learned position. In his early days, the now venerable author entered the world of letters as a poet and dramatist, cultivating what he would no doubt now regard as a too inflated pomp of diction, with the unmistakable evidences of poetic genius. His efforts in poetry have been long suspended; but many of his verses still retain a place in the memories of the lovers of English poetry. Meantime, with the addition of spoils from all middle-age books and libraries, an eye exploring the interests and curiosities of antiquity, and a singularly calm and faithful rendering of characters and circumstances—sometimes, it strikes us, as too unsympathizing in the calm—he has used the powers which he no longer devoted to poetry for the representation of historic event, and the eye which consulted dramatic arrange-

\* 1 *The History of Christianity, from the Birth of Christ to the Abolition of Paganism in the Roman Empire.* By Henry Hart Milman, D.D., Dean of St. Paul's. In three volumes. A New and Revised Edition. Murray.

2. *History of Latin Christianity; Including that of the Popes to the Pontificate of Nicolas V.* By Henry Hart Milman, D.D., Dean of St. Paul's. In nine volumes. Third Edition. John Murray.



ment has grouped and kindled over the more exciting scenes, and dramatic and tragic movements in the histories of the ministers and the martyrs, the popes and emperors, the bishops and priests thronging the immense aisles of the awful, the glorious, and the hoary church. This being said, we perhaps suggest not only the fulness, but the defect of these splendid and eloquent volumes. Abundant proof there is that Dr. Milman is equal to any of the tasks devolving on the historian; he has the faculty able to measure a theologic subtlety, or a metaphysical distinction; the worth and weight of an opinion as well as of a person; but evidently that which has attracted him in the history of the church is its objective character, its power in courts and cities. He tells the story of that which the whole world sees, is fond of standing listening by the ears of popes, of climbing to the rude councils of mediæval princes, of hurrying along the streets with the crowding army, following the baron in his mail, and his bannered hosts, to crusades and church collisions. It is a good while since we had such a rich, middle-age gossip as in reading these books, but, it seems to us, that vice which so eminently marked Macaulay has seduced Dean Milman also—the homage to success, the faith rather in the visible than in the invisible; and so, in a word, we have the story of the church told on that side on which we really least care to hear it. No, we could not but say, No, this is not the history of the church; this is not the church. Where is the church?

We wend our way through country places sometimes, and we come upon some obscure, antique village temple—the ivy-clad tower, the defaced pieces of Norman or Gothic tracery, the groined corbel, or roof, the lancet-shaped or Norman arched window; in some niche or nook an old crusader's tomb, the knees crossed, the feet pressed against the lion, the sword upon the breast, the hands clasped as in prayer: on the other side the church, some later, quainter tomb to an old merchant who retired to this spot; there his effigy and that of his dowager are sculptured, kneeling opposite each other. In the more precious portion of the church are the epitaphs of village priests, of a dean or a bishop who was buried here; or we step into the mausoleum of the noble family of the park hard by. All this is very interesting; the feelings stirred are not only natural but they are even reverent, and if we proceeded to question either the book or the guide, we should learn all about the tombs, mausoleums, the stories of the building, its architecture, its tower, and its bells. This would be called the history of the church. In some such way our author writes the history of the



church; or if either he or our readers should demur to the image of the little insignificant village tower amidst its heaving mounds—say, then, it is the story of an infinite Cologne Cathedral, with its forests of pillars, its traceries, and foliations, its arches, towers, and wondrous stained glass windows, folding and unfolding their variegated and prismatic fires. So that that kingdom of heaven about which Christ spoke, that kingdom of grace with all its mysteries, is, for the most part, left out of sight, and even in the very story of the church itself, the spiritual is altogether obscured and lost sight of before the sensual and the sensuous, or the artistic, the military, monastic, or priestly. The error, or, let us say rather, the fair defect of these volumes, is exactly the opposite of that our readers have marked in Neander. There are few readers who would not turn with delight the pages of Milman; they have, in fact, the vivacity of some of those dear old middle-age chroniclers; they have the humanity of poetry and of incident. Very much of the story is patent to the interests of all people; none beside professed theologians or students can feel an interest in Neander; that most invariable and priceless work, the rare index to, and compendium of, the thought of the church in all ages, is almost entirely inobjective. It is a history of Christian opinion; and the acts of the great masters and monarchs of the ages, the tramp of multitudes, the battle-cries of kings, and the clash of swords are heard only as we hear distant city sounds when in contemplative eventide we sit with our book upon the meditative hill. All the noisy actors were as nothing to Neander, compared with the evolvers of thought, the masters of opinion, he was less concerned to present any picture, either of what they did or of what followed upon their doings, than of their modes of opinion and modes of expressing it. Delightfully interesting as is this huge piece of scholarship, we think it must have struck most of our readers, that it might more appropriately be called a Christology, or a development of Christian doctrine, than a church history. It seems to us we need to have the story of the church told in a combination of the manner of Milman and Neander, and yet with the addition of far more—the story of the spiritual church; that story which, it must be said, slumbers in out-of-the-way places, in monkish chronicles—which we ought to know how to use and not despise—in church legends which reflect not only the opinion or the superstition of the day, but very frequently the manner of the life, and the affections of the heart. It is shocking to see the miserable bigotry with which, sometimes, this sublimest of all stories has

been told. The other day we met with an instance of this in the story of *The Church of Christ in the Middle Ages*.\* It is wretched to read the biographies of the ancient church, only that holy lives tainted, no doubt, by error, the sad property of us all, should be fastened as targets to receive the malignant and fiery arrows of modern orthodoxy. We must approach the history of the church remembering that it is the story indeed of the kingdom of God, in which the mystic seed is germinating, battling with, and even assimilating to its essence elements from human corruption; it has transformed into its own purity and blessedness, hatred of evil; the perception of even the truly diabolic in human nature, and character, and deed, need not, therefore, make us unjust to those who, in a dark time, were attempting to find a worthy world and work for some divine instincts implanted in them by Almighty grace, although those very instincts sometimes seemed only to impel them upon paths we are compelled to deplore. True, however, it is that taken in its wholeness, the story of the church is the most awfully beautiful and stupendous, and incomparably so, that the world has known. "Glorious things are spoken of thee, oh city of God!" It is our happiness that, as we conceive this wonderful and unwallled city—unwallled save as its fortifications are salvation, and its gates praise—we are not limited to the narrow confines of the Romish Church, or the still narrower dimensions of the Anglican. The middle wall of partition is removed, and western Papacy and eastern Patriarchate both contribute to the structure of the spiritual building. The bitterness of Anglicanism melts away, and it also adds some tributary beams to those towers of light; a thousand harsh and narrow sects are, before the divine view, dissolved and loosened from their harshness, and their narrowness, and councils, and synods, and presbyteries, and chapters, and congregations all become divested of their separative and mechanic character, and are seen only as the black earth is seen when it has borne the rich rose or the yellow wheat; for all ecclesiasticisms—the most pompous and magnificent, or the most simple—are a mere soil, a mere machine for the production of the spiritual flower and fruit. Despotism is always repulsive, and priestism hateful; the Papacy has ever been and is our abhorrence, and monachism has been a subterfuge for Satanic ambitions and darkest iniquities; and as we put our finger upon any of them, in the story of the church, they never seem either beautiful or defensible. But the church "is a great house," and it has its "vessels to honour

\* *The Church of Christ in the Middle Ages; an Historical Sketch, compiled from Various Authors.* Seeley.



and to dishonour:" it is a vast building, and in almost every part of it may be found "gold, silver, and precious stones," and in every part, "wood, hay, and stubble." And as we hope much for ourselves, although all in us is neither gold nor silver, we attempt to read with discrimination the story of the past, and to find spared from the conflagrations of the ages so much, in every time, that the Spirit of God alone could have given and have educated. Chiefly on the continent, and often in obscure abbeys and churches, our readers must have noticed the pale lamp of the sanctuary glimmering—a symbolic lamp, so priests and Papists say—a glimmering in mortal fire, guarded from the breezes blowing through basilicas, the stray breath from naves, surrounding chapels, or even the altar; so, it must be admitted, in some way, shines the mystic light of the church. That obscure point and small tongue of flame in the sensible world is like the church through nearly the last two thousand years, unextinguished, unconsumed—a dawn always on the hills, a star always alight in the heavens. This seems to us neither the language of fancy nor exaggeration. Those spiritual affinities and powers which struck themselves out in routes of manifold sympathy and opinion, the very depth, intensity, and elevation of which made them, as it were, a prey for the ambition of princes, and the craft of designing men; which, in their spiritual depths and heights, claimed and commanded every ecstasy of devotion and emotion, every utterance of feeling from all the innermost and most sacred recesses of human bosoms; awakening, in dark and superstitious hours, the needs of the confessional, thronging the world with spiritual forms, ghosts, and unseen terrors; in nobler moods creating the rapture of the hymn, the thunderous tempest of the old church-bell, the long-drawn and sonorous declamation of the organ, and all the deliciousness of sacred music; which called for the spell of the painter, and inspired the distinctness of Cimabue, and the haloed enthusiasm of Fra Angelico, the saintliness of Tintoretto and Domenichino; which called for poetry, and gave to Dante his matchless mystic insight; which called for every kind of art, and created architecture, making that which was before brick-work, worship, and agony, and aspiration; which called for speech, and made the talker to be the unveiler and the minister to all best, sublimest hopes and fears; which called for devotion, for the saintly axioms of à Kempis, the wise self-government of Lawrence Scupoli:—it is not wonderful if all this should represent a kingdom over which power desired and designed to sway a sceptre, and human craft to use. The story of all the kingdoms that ever were, with all their kings, pale into



insignificance before the archives of the church when we get the true point of vision. What could the hieroglyphic names on Egyptian pillars, or the stories of Ninevitic or Babylonian lions and bulls tell, compared with the pillars of the church, which, like a mystical Jachin and Boaz, bear up the great invisible, symbolic roof? Rome has two or three noble kings, and an orator, a poet, and an historian or two; and so likewise Greece, and, in modern days, France, and England, Italy, and Spain; but the best of all these latter belong to the church. Get the true point of view, separate yourself from your sect, climb to the height of some mount of God, some eternal hill, and then the story of that great, winding procession we call the church, will seem pitifully and powerfully overwhelming. National histories dwindle into insignificance before its illustrious caravan of kings and priests, poets and artists, missionaries and reformers, from heavens reddened with the fire of distant stakes, alas! too often kindled by those who looked like brethren; from battle-fields and prisons; from the day when a whole population fled, for refuge, to live and lurk in the catacombs beneath the city, which caught and purchased the lions of the wilderness to tear them to pieces—down through each succeeding year to the present hour. We are guilty, we feel, of no exaggeration when we say, Reach the true and unsectarian point of vision, and no story has the affluent fulness of humanity, the human pathos, the far-reaching sublimity of the story of the church. We cannot forbear reminding our readers of this, which seems to us to be the true catholicity of sentiment, with which the study of church history should be approached, as admirably expressed by Sir James Stephen in a passage which, while it illustrates the amiability of his own mind, we trust our readers will not feel to be too latitudinarian for theirs:—

It is not predicted in the Old Testament that the progress of the Gospel should, to any great extent, be the result of any agency preternatural and opposed to ordinary experience; nor is any such fact alleged in any of the apostolical writings as having actually occurred. There is, indeed, no good reason to suppose that such miraculous though transient disturbances of the laws of the material or the moral world, would have long or powerfully controlled either the belief or the affections of mankind. The heavenly husbandman selected the kindest soil and the most propitious season for sowing the grain of mustard-seed; and so, as time rolled on, the adaptation of our faith to the character and the exigencies of our race was continually made manifest though under new and ever varying forms.

Thus the Church was at first Congregational, that by the agitation of the lowest strata of society the superincumbent mass of corruption, idol-

atry, and mental servitude might be broken up—then Synodal or Presbyterian, that the tendency of separate societies to heresy and schism might be counteracted—then Episcopal, that in ages of extreme difficulty and peril, the whole body might act in concert and with decision—then Papal, that it might oppose a visible unity to the armies of the Crescent and the barbarians of the North—then Monastic, that learning, art, and piety might be preserved in impregnable retreats amidst the deluge of ignorance and of feudal oppression—then Scholastic, that the human mind might be educated for a return to a sounder knowledge, and to primitive doctrine—then Protestant, that the soul might be emancipated from error, superstition, and spiritual despotism—then *partially* Reformed, in the very bosom of the Papacy, lest that emancipation should hurry the whole of Christendom into precipitate change and lawless anarchy—and then at length Philosophical, to prove that as there are no depths of sin or misery to which the healing of the Gospel cannot reach, so there are no heights of speculation to which the wisdom of the Gospel cannot ascend.

Somehow after this fashion we should walk, as Bunyan would say, over the rooms of the palace called Beautiful; entering into its study, and reading the records of highest antiquity in the pedigree of the Lord of the hill, the Son of the Ancient of Days, the acts he performed, and the names of many in his service; the acts they had performed; the men who wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight; the records of the house, and the histories of famous things. Then no more should we have the reproach, deservedly uttered by Dr. Newman before the publication of Dr. Milman's volumes, that up to that time England had produced no other ecclesiastical history than *Gibbon's History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, worthy of the name. Only thus also in church history do we rise to the true philosophy of history, that is, the purpose for which all history, all humanity, is at all. It is, the true disclosure of the eternal far more than in the creation itself; to those who are able to apprehend the vision, the power of invisible things is displayed; it is the story of Divine ends and human means; it is the story of the powers of the world to come. A Divine method is as perceptible in the story of the church as in the story of a mountain or a forest, in the history of a soul as in the history of a tree; and even ecclesiastical history, which shapes to us as possibly distinct from true church history, declares itself the chrysalis of the same method.

And thus, if our conception be true and real, the story of the church is a Divine evidence and witness for God in the

world, although not exactly, we think, in the way which Dr. Milman would have us believe. It has been before noticed that the history of Dr. Milman seems to eliminate absolute truth from the idea of the church; it embodies the favourite thought which emerges in so many forms and systems in our day. It is a development, and the Teutonic element of history becomes, in the language of our historian, the Avatar for the still more wide and lofty expansion of the Christian church and sentiment. Perhaps some readers will be disposed, with ourselves, to regard this as the great heresy of these volumes; on the contrary, with other readers, they will constitute their charm. The absence of boundary and fence in doctrine, or truth; the seed seeming literally and really to perish, and only existing in the widely-spread and richly waving fields, even as we have known two or three ears of corn, really less than a handful, in the course of some few years covering, with their rich posterity, large fields, the original ears unknown, lost, dissolved; so from the first simple teachings of Christian truth went forth whole posterities of truths, developing themselves, and still developing, to infinite succession. We cannot believe that this would present a true view either of the church as a witness or a development. It is, without a doubt, the ark and centre of absolute truth, not less than a constantly growing and unfolding one; and the same sacred Text-book, which reminds us how, in its beginning, it was a grain of mustard-seed, also gives to us the figure of "livingstones," "built into a spiritual house;" and by a bold, but most necessary image, the house itself is represented as "growing into a holy temple of God." But we shall quote from Dr. Milman a very illustrative passage unfolding his conception, and the perusal of it will most likely assure our readers that the remarks we have made on the absence of the absolute in his idea of the growing church, were not unnecessary. He has been remarking on the stationary and unaggressive character of the Greek Church, and in his own eloquent manner, he contrasts this with the expansive power illustrated in the history of the Latin Church:—

Latin Christianity, on the other hand, seemed endowed with an inexhaustible principle of expanding life. No sooner had the Northern tribes entered within its magic circle, than they submitted to its yoke; and, not content with thus conquering its conquerors, it was constantly pushing forward its own frontier, and advancing into the strongholds of Northern Paganism. Gradually it became a monarchy, with all the power of a concentrated dominion. The clergy assumed an absolute despotism over the mind of man: not satisfied with ruling princes and



kings, themselves became princes and kings. Their organisation was coincident with the bounds of Christendom; they were a second universal magistracy, exercising always equal, asserting, and for a long period possessing, superior power to the civil government. They had their own jurisprudence—the canon law,—co-ordinate with and of equal authority with the Roman or the various national codes, only with penalties infinitely more terrific, almost arbitrarily administered, and admitting no exception, not even that of the greatest temporal sovereign. Western Monasticism, in its general character, was not the barren, idly laborious, or dreamy quietude of the East. It was industrious and productive: it settled colonies, preserved arts and letters, built splendid edifices, fertilized deserts. If it rent from the world the most powerful minds, having trained them by its stern discipline, it sent them back to rule the world. It continually, as it were, renewed its youth, and kept up a constant infusion of vigorous life, now quickening into enthusiasm, now darkening into fanaticism; and by its perpetual rivalry, stimulating the zeal, or supplying the deficiencies of the secular clergy. In successive ages it adapted itself to the state of the human mind. At first a missionary to barbarous nations, it built abbeys, hewed down forests, cultivated swamps, enclosed domains, retrieved or won for civilisation tracts which had fallen to waste or had never known culture. With St. Dominic it turned its missionary zeal upon Christianity itself, and spread as a preaching order throughout Christendom; with St. Francis it became even more popular, and lowered itself to the very humblest of mankind. In Jesuitism it made a last effort to govern mankind by an incorporated caste. But Jesuitism found it necessary to reject many of the peculiarities of Monasticism: it made itself secular to overcome the world. But the compromise could not endure. Over the Indians of South America alone, but for the force of circumstances, it might have been lasting. In Eastern India it became a kind of Christian Paganism; in Europe a moral and religious Rationalism, fatal both to morals and to religion.

Throughout this period, then, of at least ten centuries, Latin Christianity was the religion of the Western nations of Europe: Latin the religious language; the Latin translation of the Scriptures the religious code of mankind. Latin theology was alone inexhaustibly prolific, and held wide and unshaken authority. On most speculative tenets this theology had left to Greek controversialists to argue out the endless transcendental questions of religion, and contented herself with resolutely embracing the results, which she fixed in her inflexible theory of doctrine. The only controversy which violently disturbed the Western Church was the practical one, on which the East looked almost with indifference, the origin and motive principle of human action—grace and free will. This, from Augustine to Luther and Jansenius, was the interminable, still reviving problem. Latin Christian literature, like Greek, might have seemed already to have passed its meridian after Tertullian, Cyprian, Ambrose, and, high above all, Augustine. The age of true Latin poetry, no doubt, had long been over; the imaginative in

Christianity could only find its expression to some extent in the legend and in the ritual; but, except in a very few hymns, it was not till out of the wedlock of Latin with the Northern tongues, not till after new languages had been born in the freshness of youth, that there were great Christian poets: poets not merely writing on religious subjects, but instinct with the religious life of Christianity,—Dante, Ariosto, Tasso, Shakspeare, Milton, Calderon, Schiller. But not merely did Latin theology expand into another vast and teeming period, that of the schoolmen, culminating in Aquinas; but Latin being the common language, the clergy, the only learned body throughout Europe, it was that of law in both its branches; of science, of philosophy, even of history; of letters; in short, of civilisation. Latin Christianity, when her time was come, had her great æra of art, not only as the preserver of the traditions of Greek and Roman skill in architecture, and some of the technical operations in sculpture and painting, but original and creative. It was art comprehending architecture, painting, sculpture, and music, Christian in its fullest sense, as devoted entirely to Christian uses, expressive of Christian sentiments, arising out of and kindling in congenial spirits Christian thought and feeling.

The characteristic of Latin Christianity was that of the old Latin world—a firm and even obstinate adherence to legal form, whether of traditionary usage or written statute; the strong assertion of, and the severe subordination to, authority. Its wildest and most eccentric fanaticism, for the most part, and for many centuries, respected external unity. It was the Roman empire, again extended over Europe by an universal code and a provincial government; by a hierarchy of religious prætors or proconsuls, and a host of inferior officers, each in strict subordination to those immediately above them, and gradually descending to the very lowest ranks of society: the whole with a certain degree of freedom of action, but a restrained and limited freedom, and with an appeal to the spiritual Cæsar in the last resort.

Latin Christianity maintained its unshaken dominion, until, what I venture to call, Teutonic Christianity, aided by the invention of paper and of printing, asserted its independence, threw off the great mass of traditionary religion, and out of the Bible summoned forth a more simple faith, which seized at once on the reason, on the conscience, and on the passions of men. This faith, with a less perfectly organised outward system, has exercised a more profound moral control, through the sense of strictly personal responsibility. Christianity became a vast influence working irregularly on individual minds, rather than a great social system, coerced by a central supremacy, by an all-embracing spiritual control, and held together by rigid usage, or by outward signs of common citizenship. Its multiplicity and variety, rather than its unity, was the manifestation of its life; or rather its unity lay deeper in its being, and consisted more in intellectual sympathies, in affinities of thought and feeling, of principles and motives, in a more remote or rather untraceable kindred through the common Father and common Saviour. Ceremonial uniformity seemed to retire into subordinate im-

portance and estimation. Books gradually became, as far as the instruction of the human race, a co-ordinate priesthood. No longer rare, costly, inaccessible, or unintelligible, they descended to classes which they had never before approached. Eloquence or argument, instead of expiring on the ears of an entranced but limited auditory, addressed mankind at large, flew through kingdoms, crossed seas, perpetuated and promulgated themselves to an incalculable extent. Individual men could not but be working out in their own studies, in their own chambers, in their own minds, the great problems of faith. The primal records of Christianity, in a narrow compass, passed into all the vernacular languages of the world, where they could not be followed by the vast, scattered, and ambiguous volumes of tradition. The clergy became less and less a separate body (the awakened conscience of men refused to be content with vicarious religion through them); they ceased to be the sole arbiters of man's destiny in another life: they sank back into society, to be distinguished only as the models and promoters of moral and religious virtue, and so of order, happiness, peace, and the hope of immortality. They derived their influence less from a traditionary divine commission or vested authority, than from their individual virtue, knowledge, and earnest, if less authoritative, inculcation of divine truth. Monasticism was rejected as alien to the primal religion of the Gospel; the family life, the life of the Christian family, resumed its place as the highest state of Christian grace and perfection.

This progressive development of Christianity seems the inevitable consequence of man's progress in knowledge, and in the more general dissemination of that knowledge. Human thought is almost compelled to assert, and cannot help asserting, its original freedom. And as that progress is manifestly a law of human nature, proceeding from the divine Author of our being, this self-adaptation of the one true religion to that progress must have the divine sanction, and may be supposed, without presumption, to have been contemplated in the counsels of Infinite Wisdom.

He then proceeds, in the course of his history, to show how to the Teutonic mind we are indebted for the development of Christianity. Some of our readers may remember how, some years since, we directed attention to the remarkable ethnological fact, that the advent of Christianity was accompanied also by the advent of a new race—the new race becoming the great apostle and missionary of the new faith. We should not, therefore, with Dr. Milman, place the more special advent of the Teutonic element after the pontificate of Nicholas V. The truth is, from a very early period of Christian eras, the German or Teutonic element was a great power. It is the misfortune that when we look along one line of things all objects beside seem lost, or have to melt their individualism into that one aspect. It is so with Dr. Milman's view of Latin Christianity; yet the term is con-



siderably arbitrary. There is, no doubt, a Latin Christianity, and a Teutonic Christianity, but it is not very possible sharply to cut off the one from the other, either in epoch or geography, in time or space. There is a Latin Christianity now, we unhappily know—an Ultramontaniam quite as ambitious and superstitious as in the days of Hildebrand, or Boniface VIII., or Balthazar Cossa; and there was a Teutonic Christianity from the most ancient times, reappearing in the valleys of the Waldenses, among the "poor men of Lyons," in John of Goch, or Wessel, and in countless places and persons, as surely as in, or since, the age of Luther. This, however, is Dr. Milman's conception of Latin Christianity; it is the story of Roman strength fixing itself into the grooves of empire, yet striking out all over Europe great Roman roads, emanating from itself, and terminating in itself. At the same time, with much of that nobleness of feeling, and inclusiveness of the historical spirit, which we have before noticed, our author shows how large and brotherly a grasp he has when he thinks of the Christian name. He says:—

It is obvious that I use Christianity, and indeed Teutonic Christianity, in its most comprehensive significance, from national episcopal churches, like that of England, which aspires to maintain the doctrines and organisation of the apostolic, or immediately post-apostolic ages, onward to that dubious and undefinable verge where Christianity melts into a high moral theism, a faith which would expand to purer spirituality with less distinct dogmatic system; or that which would hardly call itself more than a Christian philosophy, a religious Rationalism. I presume not, neither is it the office of the historian, to limit the blessings of our religion either in this world or the world to come; "there is One who will know his own." As an historian I can disfranchise none who claim, even on the slightest grounds, the privileges and hopes of Christianity: repudiate none who do not place themselves without the pale of believers and worshippers of Christ, or of God through Christ.

Thus, then, the story of the church exhibits that intense vitality and abounding exuberance of life which, in every age, produces its successive lines of great men, like Athanasius, or Augustine, Anselm, or St. Bernard, to lead and to reform; or its successive lines of new converts and disciples, to bear on the Christian light to widely varying peoples and nations, as in the famous Grecian torch dance. It is not, perhaps, too profane to apply to the sacred history those well-known lines:—

I saw th' expectant nations stand,  
To catch the coming flame in turn:

I saw from ready hand to hand,  
The clear, though struggling, glory burn.

And each, as she receiv'd the flame,  
Lighted her altar with its ray ;  
Then, smiling, to the next who came,  
Speeded it on its sparkling way.

So let it take its radiant round,  
When dimm'd, revive, when lost, return,  
Till not a nation shall be found,  
On which its glories shall not burn !

Wide and inclusive as Dr. Milman's idea of Christianity is, it will be seen, we think, that the idea we desire is still more inclusive. Latin Christianity is exactly that aspect which seems to us least Christianity; almost, as we read its history, it seems the the story of the church *minus* Christianity. It only reminds us of John Foster's celebrated image illustrating the depths of popular ignorance in an Augustan or Medicean age of letters. "It is," says he, "like an immense "and splendid bonfire on the heath, illuminating the heavens, "and throwing out its reflections far and near, while in the "hamlets and villages all around, the poor are starving "for want of food or fuel;" so in this loud clatter of dark age and middle age excitement, while the church was everywhere ubiquitous, agitating thrones, coercing knights, laying its interdicts and bulls, like burthens grievous to be borne, on the backs of men and cities, the great work the Founder of Christianity came to do seems to have been pretty generally forgotten, and the souls he came to console and to save, uncared for; and this must be regarded, we think, as especially the doom of Latin Christianity. Of course, Latin Christianity includes an epoch which may still be conceded to be one of those felicitous accidents honoured of Providence for its own great purposes, the establishment of the early church in the city of Rome.

There can be to a Christian mind no more interesting study than that to which Mr. Allies, from an intensely Papist point of view, has called attention, the formation of Christendom;\* that period in the history of Europe which he well and truly calls the consummation of the old world, when a voice was heard in the world—greater, more potent, thrilling, and universal than the last cry of the old society, *Civis sum Romanus*—the voice, *Sum Christianus*. Tracing what we owe to this mighty revolution, Mr. Allies very admirably says:—

\* *The Formation of Christendom*. Part First. By T. W. Allies. Longmans.

It is true that the breaking-up of the Roman empire—reducing the powers of society into a sort of chaos—long suspended these results. Like the seeds discovered in Egyptian tombs, they lay for hundreds of years, not losing their vital force, but buried, as it were, in the great Christian mind till the hour of awakening should come. The world of thought in which we live is, after all, formed by Christianity. Modern Europe is a relic of Christendom, the virtue of which is not gone out of it. Gregory VII. and Innocent III. have ruled over generations which ignored them; have given breadth to minds which condemned their benefactors as guilty of narrow priestcraft, and derided the work of those benefactors as an exploded theory. Let us take an example in what is, morally, perhaps the worst and most shocking period of the last three centuries—the thirty years preceding the great French revolution. We shall see that at this time even minds which had rejected, with all the firmness of a reprobate will, the regenerating influence of Christianity, could not emancipate themselves from the virtue of the atmosphere which they had breathed. They are immeasurably greater than they would have been in Pagan times, by the force of that faith which they misrepresented and repudiated. To prove the truth of my words, compare for a moment the great artist who drew Tiberius and Domitian and the Roman empire in the first century, with him who took up its decline and fall in the second and succeeding centuries. How far wider a grasp of thought, how far more manifold an experience, combined with a philosophic purpose, in Gibbon than in Tacitus! He has a standard within him by which he can measure the nations as they come in long procession before him. In that vast and wondrous drama of the Antonines and Constantine, Athanasius and Leo, Justinian and Charlemagne, Mahomet, Zinghis Khan, and Timour, Jerusalem and Mecca, Rome and Constantinople, what stores of thought are laid up—what a train of philosophic induction exhibited! How much larger is this world become than that which trembled at Cæsar! The very apostate profits by the light which has shone on Thabor, and the blood which has flowed on Calvary. He is a greater historian than his heathen predecessor, because he lives in a society to which the God whom he abandoned has disclosed the depth of its being, the laws of its course, the importance of its present, the price of its futurity.

Hence the man became altered and elevated in all his relationships; the foul world was baptized with Divine purity; woman's character, and personality, and destiny were altered too, and even Protestant as we are, we can sympathize with the elevated feelings which crown with reverent regards the names of the first-fruits, and standard-bearers of the cross, especially those seven:—Felicitas, Perpetua, Agatha, Lucy, Agnes, Cæcilia, and Anastasia; the first fair lilies of the church, shining forth from that black soil of impurity, cruelty, and lust, the cities of the empire.



Modern Papists turn to admirable capital the persecutions of ancient Rome, and the life in the catacombs; and we may just say, in passing, that, as pieces of church history for the people, Papists have availed themselves of the genius of the artist in two stories of those ages which we do not remember, at this moment, that Protestantism has at all matched: the *Fabiola* of Dr. Wiseman, and the *Calista* of Dr. Newman. In spite of all the deductions we have to make as incident to human infirmity, that early period, of the advent of Christianity, still impresses us with an awful beauty. Dr. Milman, we perceive, attempts to argue down, with some other modern writers, the number of the martyrs of those times. We read his doubts with the respect which they deserve to receive, and still venture to express our conviction that while, in the nature of things, there must have been exaggerations, the numbers have not been over-estimated. Independent of what we conceive as essential to paganism, or a mere animal-intellectual, or intellectual-animal reception of religion, always disposed to carry its contempt and scorn to cruelty, especially in the midst of an essentially cruel people as the Romans undoubtedly were—their immense exhibitions in the Colosseum abundantly prove this, and Cicero, certainly one of the most refined and least cruel, apologized for it as essential and useful, much in the same way in which the *Saturday Review* in the present day has apologized for the attempt to restore the prize-ring to our civilization:—independent, we say, of this, the evidences seem, to our minds, overwhelming. What but the world above-ground could have driven multitudes to reside in those subterranean excavations, the catacombs, the refuge and retreat of the Romish Church of the first centuries? The church had no sword in its hand then; slaves and workpeople, who at the sudden touch of apostolic light found themselves elevated to the condition of manhood and womanhood, fled to those dens and caves of the earth; in them they lived, and died, and found their sepulchre. And the opinion we still maintain, contrary to that of Dr. Milman, seems to be strongly held by the learned Dr. Lee in his interesting *Lectures on Ecclesiastical History*. There in those sandpits and rude wide excavations—called by Horace, “The common sepulchre of the vilest of the people”—in subterranean Rome, the Roman lady fled with her slave and handmaid, in whom she suddenly found a confidante and a friend; in a common Saviour and the common hope of a glorious immortality: thither sometimes fled the Roman gentleman with his whole family, perhaps all his slaves too with him, having espoused the truth, as is gathered from such an inscription as—“Here lies “Gordianus, Nuncius of Gaul, murdered for the faith, with his

"whole family. They rest in peace. The handmaid, Theophila, "has erected this." Dr. Maitland's *Church in the Catacombs*, as a popular book, is well known to our readers, and some of our readers have no doubt passed the long corridors and entered what is called the Lapidarian Hall of the Vatican, and read there the inscriptions, deciphered from the tombs in the catacombs, and contrasted them, as Dr. Lee has done, with similar monumental inscriptions from tombs in the ruins of the Eternal City. There is the ancient pagan world and its despair, and there the young Christian church and its hope, blooming with, and full of, immortality. It is most striking, the contrast; the faith in the invisible world, the invisible God, the present but unseen Saviour, shone in upon the minds of these first disciples with a strength of illumination of which we can form no conception, and seem to have lost almost the power to know. Among the gravestones of the pagans, "*Vale, vale, in eternam vale,*" is the one pathetic, unvarying, monotonous accent of stunned and stolid wretchedness and gloom. The door of the vault to the pagan was the entrance to *Domus eternalis*, an eternal home. "Oh, relentless Fortune," is the inscription of a mother over an infant child, "who delightest in cruel death! why is Maximus so suddenly "snatched from me?" Of another kind, but equal in its despair, is the inscription on a gravestone, "To the divine "manes of Titus Claudius Secundus, who lived fifty-seven years. "Baths, wine, love, make life what it is. Farewell, Farewell!" Then go with Dr. Lee and contrast the opposite tombs: "In "Christ. Alexander is not dead but lives beyond the stars; his "body rests in this tomb," and with scarce an exception, every gravestone has the epitaph, "In peace." Can we form any idea of what society must have gained by this wondrous ray of light and faith shining through that cruel and heartless city? We cannot. Christianity rolled the burden from life, the stone from the sepulchre, the weight from the coffin, the darkness from the unseen world; in a word, "life and immortality were brought to light by the Gospel." This was the starting point of the Christian ages, and the church has always most nearly reached its best and purest development, and its highest point of power, as, in a similar manner, it has touched the unsophisticated intelligence, imparting to it something of the freshness and fulness of those early infant days. We cannot attempt to follow our author, or the course of church history through its early struggles, and the successive steps by which it wound its way to become of importance to the calculations of statesmen and emperors. We have said, no story can be so sublime, none even so romantic, as the story of the church. The names of cities like



Milan, or Tours, or Canterbury call up a wonderful succession of associations ; names like those of Vigilantius, or Jerome, or Martin of Tours, what struggles they suggest of times when early error was battling for the mastery over conscience and opinion, when Vigilantius had to exclaim, and was severely reprehended by that morose and uncomfortable saint Jerome for exclaiming, "What need is there for you, with so much respect, "not only to honour, but even to adore that—I know not what "to call it—which you worship, as you carry it in a little "vessel?"—when the worship of relics had to be condemned by him, "Why do you, in your adoration, kiss dust folded in a linen "cloth?"—and the tapers on the altars had to be condemned by him ; "Under the pretext of religion we see a custom introduced "into our churches, which approximates to the rites of the "Gentiles, namely the lighting of multitudes of tapers while "the sun is shining. And everywhere men kiss, in their "adoration, a small quantity of dust, folded up in a little cloth, "and deposited in a little vessel. Men of this stamp give great "honour, forsooth ! to the most blessed martyrs, thinking with a "few insignificant wax tapers to glorify those whom the Lamb, "who is in the midst of the throne, enlightens with all the "brightness of his majesty." Such sentences reveal the beginnings of the development of pagan rites in the history of the church. Yet the church grew ; persecution and heresy could not kill it ; the self-evidencing light and life of truth gave to it accumulating victories over the minds, thoughts, consciences, and hopes of men ; throughout the empire its representative numbers increased from thousands to millions. "The earth helped the woman," and swallowed up the flood which the dragon poured out to engulf her. But the condition upon which the earth helped the woman was, that she received much of its own grossness from the earth, which helped her. Whether it be true or not that Constantine was not really converted to Christianity until he was stretched upon his death-bed, it is certain that he gave the widest toleration to Christians, cast down the pagan idols, reared the cross as an object of adoration in their place, decreed the observance of the Lord's day, and thus, in fact, proclaimed the empire Christian henceforth. There is another reason for Latin Christianity—it is enthroned amidst lictored hosts ; its voice is heard high and clear amid the councils of statesmen and kings, and amidst the watch-words of armies ; warm defenders of the Papacy and its sublimely grotesque succession—in which the same person seems to us alternately a Kemble and a clown upon a village booth—tell us that the Pope is the secret of all history. Mr.



Allies uses this very phrase in his recent work on *The Formation of Christendom*. We have no doubt that the church is the secret of history—not Dr. Milman's Latin Church—not Mr. Allies' Pope and Papacy—not the Eastern or the Western Church—but that which M. Guizot has designated the most extensive and purest idea that has ever rallied mankind, *the idea of spiritual society*. It will be seen that to this, throughout our remarks, we have recurred again and again, as the true description of the church. This lifts us over the region of the temporal and the temporary, into the invisible and really spiritual, and all Dr. Milman's story, like innumerable other such works, is only a scaffolding to this. The true Jerusalem is out of sight, behind the rude framework, the coarse poles, composed of popes and emperors, and such things, which are but the material means for rearing God's great building, the city of souls. Thus, one of those inexplicable, imperial characters, standing out in the story of the church in the night of time, was Charlemagne, more distinct to our eye than Constantine, and, no doubt, to be regarded as a Christian king; he served the church very much after the rude fashion of Clovis; when he heard the story of the crucifixion of Christ—"If I'd been there with my Franks, I'd have chastised those Jews!" Karl, no doubt, fixed the lines and circumvallations of the church not less than those of Europe; his religion was what may be conceived of a rude, strong impersonation of animal majesty—immense strength, shrewdness, and determination flashed upon by the lights and impulses of a reverent, superstitious nature. He lived in an age when the Christian morality was not an essential part of the Christian religion. Sometimes he presents aspects to us of a character not altogether unlike our Henry VIII., especially in his capacity for wives; but his tender and passionate grief for the lost Fastrada will assure us of an emotional being beneath the passionate, incomparably deeper than any to which the Tudor was ever susceptible. He pledged himself to the Christian faith and truth, after the wild, rude fashion of his times; we may suppose they had power over him. Nor was he a mere Frankish boor; he had the love and the interest of letters, learning, and literature, and the orders and decencies of church things at least; but he converted nations on the battle-field, and as he overcame the rugged Saxons he carried Christianity and civilization with him in the conquest; and church historians have always delighted to tell how he smote down the Irmin-Saule, that rude, vast, shapeless idol, symbolic image and national deity of the Saxon people. Thus, his conversions were conquests. When we forsake the

first simple elements of faith and power, by which, from the upper room in Jerusalem, the early Christians stretched their quiet, peaceful sceptre over the minds of men, it perhaps must always be most successfully so. Charlemagne and most of the members of his order, reflect some of the shadows of their own character upon Christianity in return for that glory which it has reflected on them. It is a singular spectacle that of multitudes baptized to escape the risk of their lives; and even where conquest and baptism seem to have secured success and conquest to his arms as well as sympathy to his aims, the cruel blood-shedding of the wild, remorseless warrior often makes us start back aghast at this famed champion of the church—as when at Verdun, on the Aller, he slaughtered in cold blood four thousand warriors who had surrendered themselves; these are the blots on the shields of these imperial nursing fathers of the church. Clots of human gore do not look beautiful upon the precious, peaceful symbol of the cross; yet, it is impossible to estimate too thoroughly, or highly, the power and influence of Charlemagne, if the church were to be an objective and material thing. He clutched at the throats of wild Saxon kings, and, sword in hand, while his other grip was upon their beard, pleasantly exclaimed, “Will you be baptized, then?” Such we take to have been the baptism of Widekind, and many another rugged chief. We must not look for nice notions in a man like Charlemagne. Of the Christianity he adopted and enforced, we should, for the most part, wash our hands clean; so also, perhaps, we should of the Gospel of Judaism as proclaimed at the sword’s point by Moses, Joshua, and Joab; but that is not the point that a judicious reader of church history will notice; rather he will consider how the aggressive character of Charlemagne’s very liberal conception of Christianity hurled back the efforts and irruptions of barbarism on society—not a bit of doubt about it. The man Charlemagne put barbarian Europe into its apprenticeship to Christianity; the thing he carried to the rude people was coarse enough, but coarser far were the bloody superstitions, the sacrifices, rites, and ceremonies of the wild people themselves. The ordinance of baptism, mechanical as it seems to us, and unmeaning, was a great national oath that the gods of the hills and the woods should be renounced for the Cross; and while, no doubt, the old nature was constantly flaring up, and breaking out in revolt, hither and thither, Carl, as he indented his foot on the different fields and cities of Europe, made it to be understood that each indentation was to be a mark for some future milestone of progress; and that social order, and religion, letters, the extirpation of barbarism, and the well-being of society, were to be understood as



synonymous with the reception of Christianity. Those indentations of the strong, the even wild Frankish giant, Europe has preserved the mark of to this day, in spite of all succeeding changes, even regards with some reverence the marks of that strong, savage, and, withal, yet devotional shrewdness, which was able to belt Europe round with conquests and feudatories, and to establish an equal belt and chain of feudal hierarchies. No character more than Charlemagne compels us to estimate characters and events by another standard than the degree of civilization, and the tone of opinion under which we live. Sometimes we have conceived of him as a poor, great, old, uncombed, swarth, and hairy savage of a Romulus; he seems, with that gory sword in his hand, and blood splashed all over the hide of him, to be not unfaithful to the light and gift in him; hard-working, steady-minded old savage. But there is a far other conception, and we look at the stature of him, as we are able to see it, tall, calm, and mild, the strength of intelligence in the face superseding and chasing away the glare and savageness no doubt often there, crown on his head, the long sword, like another Excalibur, by his side, the globe, surmounted by the cross, in his hand, and even the priestly dalmatica over his shoulders,—there seems to us no inconsistency in thus realizing what he was in the better self he became in history. The rude warrior, the remorseless statesman, the passionate lover, the wild listener to the bardic strains of the poet, was reputed a great theologian too, and discussed, with orthodox tendencies, subtle questions in a milder spirit than bishops and popes; and we read, while he was seated in his palace in the midst of his clergy, when a letter containing certain theologic theses was read aloud, the imperial theologian descended from his throne, and from its steps addressed the meeting in a long speech, refuting the doctrine of the letter—when he had ended, inquiring, “What think ye of this?” The church historian, not less than the other, must allow for the social influence of the time in moulding men, and in bending events. Truly says Dr. Lee, “The astronomers allow for the influence of refraction; time is to the one what the atmosphere is to the other.” Charlemagne condescended to receive his imperial crown from the hands of the Pope; in return, he threw over the person of the Pope the shield of his defence and protection. He surely little thought that that feudal hierarchy he created, and to which he gave capacities of such consolidation, would gradually but surely so advance to power, that his successors in the empire would, ages after, stand shivering and trembling before their word, that the time should come when the descendants of the fishermen would assume far more than either regal or imperial splendours or powers,



declare their right to make or unmake kings, and, at last, in the person of Benedetto Gaetani, Boniface VIII., assume powers before which even Hildebrand and Innocent III. would have startled.

No doubt the interest and splendour of church history very greatly arise from the recitation in pages like those of Dr. Milman, of those processes and steps by which the humble and obscure became the obvious and the haughty; those processes it is not possible for us to trace; we have no space either to delineate the wondrous course by which

The sacred river ran,  
Through caverns, measureless to man,  
Down to the sunlit sea.

Dr. Milman is a believer, evidently, in the dignity of history; he never parts with his dignity—we know of no writer who does this excepting Mr. Carlyle. All the stories Dr. Milman tells have a spice of splendour and grandeur in them; like Gibbon, or Lord Macaulay, nothing seems worthy to be recited unless it has about it something of the magnificence of stage effect. We could have wished he had illustrated those dark places the better and purer men of the church sought to illuminate and to bless; or that he laid under contribution the immense and copious stores of monastic chronicles and stories, so copiously and preciously referred to, for instance, by Kenelm Digby in the *Mores Catholici*, or the *Compitum*, or the *Broad Stone of Honour*. All these books are church windows, stained glass, no doubt, but still rich windows—we suspect we shall grievously offend a number of our Protestant friends when we say—transferring us more immediately into the mind and manners of the church of the middle ages than any others on which we can very readily lay our hand. If it should be thought that such store of stories presents too exclusively the mellowed richness of the church and monastic life, other old chroniclers present another side. What a picture of the devotion and the ignorance of the age we have in some of the stories told by Reginald Scott; as, for instance, of that priest, a certain Sir John, who was in the habit of going abroad with his monks on moonlight nights to rob his own miller's pond of fish; at last, the miller himself made his appeal to Sir John, and as he could not find the thief, he besought him by bell, book, and candle, to curse the thief, that he might have no joy of his fish; and, therefore, the next Sunday, Sir John got him into the pulpit; having put on his surplice and his stole, and before all the people pronounced those solemn words—

All you that have stolen the miller's eels,  
*Laudate Dominum de cœlis.*  
And all they that have consented thereto,  
*Benedicamus Domino.*

"Lo! there," said he, "my masters, is sauce for your eels!" Stories like these abound in that great bibliopoliſt, Mr. Wright's *Essays on England in the Middle Ages*; they are beneath the dignity of history, yet we could conceive some such as giving a colloquial charm, and pleasant, easy familiarity, to the story. Yet we surely have not conveyed the impression that Dr. Milman has not set the stream of his narrative beneath most lively and animating lights. One of the testing points of a powerful historian is happiness in the biographies which must demand a place in his pages. We will break the course of our own tame reflection by the story of St. Benedict; it is lengthy, but from twelve volumes, perhaps our readers will ask to see some illustrations of the manner of an historian who expects attention to be protracted through so long a course of pages:—

In the time of Benedict no man could have made a profound impression or exercised an enduring influence upon the mind of man, without that enthusiasm in himself which would environ him with wonder, or without exciting that enthusiasm in others which would eagerly accept, propagate, and multiply the miracles which avouched his sanctity.

How perfectly the whole atmosphere was impregnated with this inexhaustible yearning for the supernatural, appears from the ardour with which the monastic passions were indulged at the earliest age. Children were nursed and trained to expect at every instant more than human interferences; their young energies had ever before them examples of asceticism, to which it was the glory, the true felicity of life, to aspire. The thoughtful child had all his mind thus pre-occupied; he was early, it might almost seem intuitively, trained to this course of life; wherever there was gentleness, modesty, the timidity of young passion, repugnance to vice, an imaginative temperament, a consciousness of unfitness to wrestle with the rough realities of life, the way lay invitingly open—the difficult, it is true, and painful, but direct and unerring way—to heaven. It lay through perils, but was made attractive by perpetual wonders; it was awful, but in its awfulness lay its power over the young mind. It learned to trample down that last bond which united the child to common humanity, filial reverence; the fond and mysterious attachment of the child and the mother, the in-born reverence of the son to the father. It is the highest praise of St. Fulgentius that he overcame his mother's tenderness by religious cruelty.

History, to be true, must condescend to speak the language of legend; the belief of the times is part of the record of the times; and, though

there may occur what may baffle its more calm and searching philosophy, it must not disdain that which was the primal, almost universal, motive of human life.

Benedict was born at Nursia, in the province of Spoleto, of respectable parents. He was sent to Rome, according to still-prevailing custom, to be instructed in the liberal arts. But his pure spirit shrunk instinctively from the vices of the capital. He gave up the perilous study of letters, and preferred a holy ignorance. He fled secretly from the society of his dangerous associates, from the house of his parents, who, it seems, had accompanied him, as of old the father of Horace his son, to Rome. His faithful nurse alone discovered his design and accompanied his flight. This incident seems to imply that his flight took place at a very tender age; a circumstance, told at a later period, intimates that it was not before the first impulses of youthful passion. He took refuge in a small village called Effide, about two miles from Subiaco. The rustic inhabitants, pleased with his modesty and sweetness of disposition, allowed him to inhabit a cell near their church. Here took place his first miracle. The faithful nurse, Cyrilla, had borrowed a stone sieve, commonly used in that part of the country to make bread. It fell from her hands, and broke in two. Benedict, moved by her distress, united the two pieces, prayed over them, and the vessel became whole. The wondering rustics are said to have hung the miraculously restored sieve over the church door. But the sensitive youth shrunk from fame, as he had from vice: he sought a deeper solitude. In the neighbourhood of Subiaco, by the advice and assistance of a monk, named Romanus, he found a wild and inaccessible cavern, into which he crept, and for three years the softly and delicately educated boy lay hid in this cold and dismal dwelling from the sight of men. His scanty food was supplied by Romanus, who took it by stealth from his own small pittance in his monastery. The cave was at the foot of the hill on which the monastery stood, but there was no path down the precipitous rock. The food, therefore, was let down by a rope, and a small bell tied to the rope gave notice of its coming. Once the devil broke the rope; but he could not baffle the inventive charity of Romanus. To an imagination so prepared, what scene could be more suited to nurture the disposition to wonders and visions than the wild and romantic region about Subiaco? The cave of Benedict is still shown as a hallowed place, high on the crest of a toppling rock, with the Anio roaring beneath in a deep ravine, clothed with the densest forest, and looking on another wild, precipitous crag. Half way up the zigzag and laborious path stands the convent of Benedict's sister, St. Scolastica. So entirely was Benedict cut off from the world that he ceased to mark not merely the progress of ordinary time, but even the fasts and festivals of the Church. A certain priest had prepared for himself some food of unusual delicacy for the festival of Easter. A mysterious admonition within his heart reproved him for this luxurious indulgence, while the servant of God was pining with hunger. Who he was, this holy and heaven-designated servant, or where he dwelt, the priest knew not, but he was led through the tangled



thickets and over the rugged rocks to the cave of Benedict. Benedict was ignorant that it was Easter, and not till he was assured that it was that festal day, would he share in the heaven-sent banquet.

The secret of his hiding-place was thus betrayed, and some of the rude shepherds of the country, seeing the hermit in his coarse attire, which was no more than a sheep-skin thrown round him, mistook him at first for a wild beast: but when they approached him, they were so melted by his gentle eloquence, that their hearts yielded at once, and they were subdued to courtesy of manners and Christian belief. But the young hermit had not escaped the notice or the jealousy of the enemy of mankind. One day (we must not omit puerilities so characteristic, and this is gravely related by a late serious and learned writer) he appeared in the shape of a blackbird, and flapped him over the eyes with his wings, so as almost to blind him. The evil one took a more dangerous form, the unforgotten image of a beautiful woman whom young Benedict had known at Rome (he could not, then, have left it so very young). This was a perilous probation, and it was only by rushing forth and rolling his naked body upon the brambles and sharp points of the rocks that Benedict obtained the hard-wrung victory. Never after this, as he said to his familiar friends, was he exposed to these fleshly trials. Yet his warfare was not over. He had triumphed over sensual lust, he was to be tempted by religious ambition. A convent of monks in the neighbourhood, excited by the fame of his sanctity, determined to choose Benedict for their head. He fairly warned them of the rigorous and uncompromising discipline which he should think it his duty to enforce. Either fondly believing their own sincerity, or presuming on the latent gentleness of Benedict, they could not be dissuaded from the design. But in a short time the firm severity of the young abbot roused their fierce resentment; hatred succeeded to reverence and love. They attempted to poison him; but the cup with the guilty potion burst asunder in the hands of Benedict, who calmly reproved them for their crime, prayed for the divine forgiveness, reminded them of his own warnings before he undertook their government, and withdrew into his happier solitude.

It was no longer a solitude. The sanctity of Benedict, and the fame of his miracles, drew together daily fresh aspirants to the holiness or the quietness of his recluse life. In a short time arose in the poetic district, on the peaks and rent cliffs, under the oaks and chestnuts round Subiaco, twelve monasteries, each containing twelve votaries (Benedict considered that less or more than this number led to negligence or to discord). The names of many of these cloisters designate their romantic sites; the Monastery of the Cavern, St. Angelo and St. Clement by the Lake, St. John by the Stream, St. Victor at the foot of the Mountain; Eternal Life, or the Holy Valley; and one now called Santa Scolastica, rising amid embowering woods on a far seen ridge of the Apennines. The fame of these institutions soon spread to Rome. Some of the nobles joined the young fraternities, others sent their sons for the benefit of a severe and religious education; and already consider-

able endowments in farms and other possessions were bestowed by the piety and gratitude of parents or admirers. Maurus (afterwards St. Maur) was one of these young nobles, who became before long the friend, assistant, and successor of Benedict. To Maurus was soon attributed a share in the miraculous powers, as in the holiness of Benedict. Though wells of waters had broken out at the prayer of Benedict on the thirsty summits of the rocks, where the hermitages hung aloft, they were not always at hand or always full. A noble youth of fifteen, Placidus, in drawing water from the lake, fell in and was carried by the waves far from the shore. Benedict cried to Maurus to assist. Maurus rushed in, and walking on the water, drew out the fainting youth by the hair. A contest of humility began: Maurus attributed the wonder to the holiness of his master, Benedict to the devotion of Maurus. It was decided by the youth, who declared that he had seen the sheepskin cloak of Benedict hovering over him. It would not be difficult to admit all the facts of this miracle, which might be easily accounted for by the excitement of all parties.

It is strange to see the blackest crimes constantly, as it were, in collision with this high-wrought holiness. Florentius, a neighbouring priest, was envious of the holy Benedict. He attempted to poison him in some bread which he sent as a present. Benedict had a prescient consciousness of the treason; and a raven at his command flew away with the infected food. Florentius, baffled in his design upon the life of the master, plotted against the souls of the disciples. He turned seven naked girls into the garden of one of the monasteries. Benedict determined to withdraw from the dangerous neighbourhood. He had set forth on his journey when Maurus hastily overtook him, and not without some signs of joy, communicated the tidings of the death of Florentius. The wicked priest had been buried in the ruins of his chamber, which had fallen in, while the rest of the house remained standing. Benedict wept over the fate of his enemy, and imposed penance on his disciple for his unseemly and unchristian rejoicing in the calamity even of the wicked.

Benedict pursued his way (as the more poetic legend added, under the guidance of two visible angels) to Monte Casino, about fifty miles from Subiaco. On Monte Casino still arose a temple of Apollo amid its sacred grove; and in the midst, as it were, of Christianity, the pagan peasants brought their offerings to their ancient god. But there was no human resistance when the zealous recluse destroyed the profane and stately edifice, broke the idol, overturned the altar, and cut down the grove. Unreluctant the people received the religion of Christ from the eloquent lips of Benedict. The enemy of mankind attempted some obstruction to the building of the church devoted to St. Martin. The obstinate stones would not move but at the prayers of Benedict. They fell and crushed the builders, who were healed by his intercession. The last stronghold of paganism was replaced by a Benedictine monastery; and here arose that great model republic, which gave its laws to almost the whole of Western

Monasticism. If we might imagine the pagan deity to have any real and conscious being, and to represent the Sun, he might behold the monastic form of Christianity, which rose on the ruins of his ancient worship, almost as universally spread throughout the world, as of old the adoration of his visible majesty.

In the same manner he tells the story of Anschar, the Apostle of Sweden :—

The Abbey of Corbey, near Amiens, was the great monastic institution in that part of the Empire. Among the abbots had been the famous princes Adalhard and Wala, illegitimate scions of the race of Charles Martel. In that Abbey there was a monk of noble French descent, of the gentlest disposition, but of deep and settled piety. From his childhood he had been possessed by an ardent imagination; and that imagination, as was sure to be the case in that age, had yielded itself up as a willing bond-slave of religion. At the early age of five his mother's death had made a strong impression on the sensitive child. A remarkable dream decided his calling. In his sleep he fancied himself struggling on a miry and slippery ground, beyond which lay a beautiful meadow. There he beheld a lady of stately form, in rich attire, surrounded by females in white apparel; among them his mother. He strove to reach her, but the mire clung round his feet, and he could not struggle onward. The soft voice of the majestic lady, the Virgin herself, addressed him, "My son, wouldst thou join thy mother?" He replied, "Most earnestly do I wish it." He who would come to us must flee those vanities which we abhor." From that moment the serious child, abandoning all sport and gaiety, was devoted to prayer and study. Up to adolescence he was educated in monastic discipline, but the ardour of youth had begun to relax his strict austerity. At that time the world was startled by the tidings of Charlemagne's death. That the mighty monarch of so many kingdoms must suffer the common mortality of man, struck the imaginative youth. His life became, as it were, one vision. Once he thought that he had died suddenly; and at the moment of his death he prayed to the apostle St. Peter and to St. John the Baptist, who appeared instantly before him. He was conducted by his saintly guides to Purgatory, where he passed three days in darkness, and almost suffocation; those days appeared a thousand years. He passed on to heaven, whose inhabitants and their glory he was permitted to behold; and a voice of the most exquisite sweetness, but so clear that it seemed to fill the world, spoke to him out of the unapproachable light, "Go, and return hither, crowned with martyrdom." On this triumphant end, which he gained at last, not by the sword, but by the slow mortification of his life, was thenceforth set the soul of Anschar.

His thoughts had no doubt been already turned towards the conversion of the heathen by his residence in a monastic outpost of Christendom, founded by the zeal of the Corbey monks in a beautiful valley on the west bank of the Wesser, east of Paderborn, and called New Corbey.



In this convent he had been appointed to preach to the people, and doubtless prepared himself for his future successes.

When the demand was made at the court of Louis the Pious, among the assembled prelates and nobles, who could be found fit and willing to attend the Christian Harold into his Pagan country, and to risk his life for the propagation of the faith, all were silent, until Wala, the abbot of Corbey, bethought him of Anschar. The monk was summoned, and calmly but resolutely undertook the mission. The abbot inquired whether he acted but in obedience to his superior, or from his own free will. He modestly persisted in his determination, unshaken by the persuasion of those who loved him, and the reproof of others, who, unable to aspire to the sublimity of his faith, were jealous of his superiority.

A brother of the convent, named Authbert, though of noble birth, was so kindled by the zeal of Anschar, that he resolved to accompany him. Anschar spent two years in Denmark, but over his difficulties and his successes the biographer passes with unsatisfactory rapidity. He formed a school of twelve children. At the end of the two years his companion retired, in the extremity of sickness, to New Corbey, and died.

But, whatever the success of Anschar in Denmark, the more remote regions of the North suddenly opened on the zealous missionary. An embassy from Sweden announced that many of that nation were prepared to accept Christianity. Anschar did not hesitate at once to proceed to this more distant and unknown scene of labour. As he crossed the Sound, his ship was attacked by pirates; he escaped with difficulty to the shore, losing all he possessed, especially the precious treasure of forty books. On his arrival in Sweden, the reigning king allowed him full liberty to preach the Gospel. There were many Christian captives in the land, who gladly welcomed a priest who could administer the sacred mysteries of the faith. Anschar, after some time, returned to France; and Gauzbert, a Frankish monk, was sent as Bishop to Sweden.

In the mean time the archbishopric of Hamburg had been founded. Anschar was raised to the see, and invested with metropolitan power over all the northern missions. But the Northmen had as yet learned no respect for Christianity. They surprised Hamburg. Anschar hardly escaped, bearing away nothing but the reliques of the saints; everything else, even his library, was burned to ashes.

The prospects of Christianity in Sweden were suddenly darkened. The king had favoured the preachers of the Gospel; the people were still obdurately wedded to their idolatry. An insurrection broke out; one Christian teacher suffered death; the Bishop was seized and expelled from the kingdom. For seven years Paganism triumphed without disturbance. Anschar in the mean time had been reinstated in the archiepiscopate, now formed by the union of Hamburg with Bremen. More hopeful intelligence came from Sweden; it was rumoured that all who had been concerned in the insurrection had, in some awful manner, been

marked for untimely death: the possessor of a book, which had been taken during the pillage by his son, was more signally visited by the Divine wrath. But either from prudence or timidity, the Bishop Gauzbert represented himself as personally so obnoxious to the hatred of the people, that his presence could but excite more bitter hostility. Anschar did not hesitate to obey the call; and in the account of this mission appear some curious incidents characteristic of the versatile Paganism of the country. "If," it was said, "you want a new God, there is your late king, Eric, in whose honour we have lately built a temple." But Anschar, however strongly dissuaded, determined again to try his influence on the Christians' old Protector, the king. He invited him to a feast, made him presents; but the king, become more cautious or more timid, declared that on so great a question he would consult his people and his gods. True to his word, he first held a private council of his nobles, where it was agreed to consult the gods by lots. The lot was favourable to the acceptance of Christianity; the whole people were then assembled in their parliament; and the herald publicly proclaimed the object of their meeting, the admission or rejection of Christianity. The people were of conflicting opinions. A tumult had almost begun, when an aged man arose, and declared that the God of the Christians had been singularly powerful and propitious, in saving him and others from the perils of the sea, and from pirates. "It would be much wiser, since our own gods are not always so favourable, to have this God also, who is so mighty, and so ready a Protector." This prudent advice carried with it the whole assembly. Christianity was admitted by general consent as a religion permitted by the nation. Churches might be built, and priests allowed to celebrate the mysteries of the faith. On the death of the king some opposition was at first threatened by his son. His hostility died away; the Christians were even allowed to set up a bell, which seems to have been peculiarly detested by the Swedish pagans. Once having obtained a footing, Christianity wrought slowly on till it had achieved the final conversion of the kingdom. But it was not till above a century and a half later, that—under the reign of Canute the Great over the united Christian kingdoms of England and Denmark—were sent over to Denmark English priests and bishops for the final conversion of his whole continental realm. Canute himself bore as it were the homage of his two Teutonic kingdoms to the feet of the Pontiff of Latin Christianity. The tenth century saw the first dawn of Christianity in Norway.

On every page, however, of these volumes there is matter on which it would be possible to debate and to dilate. Almost every name is famous, every event critical. St. Francis and St. Dominic find an equally copious treatment with those apostles to whom we have referred; and we are bound to say that even heretics themselves meet with tender treatment at the hands of our large-hearted historian. Sagarelli and the extraordinary Dolcino, of Novara, that more rugged Savonarola, who hurled

his life with indignant faith at pitiless Rome, and with his beautiful Margareta expiated their heresy, if we ought not rather to say their heroism, in death by tortures from burning pincers and blazing pans of fire, midst cruelties so consummate that one would suppose only fiends could invent or inflict, and only superhuman natures, already emancipated from the painful conditions of the flesh, could endure. Such stories the church historian has to recite, and the student to know. Calmly, if pityingly, the reader has to look down the wondrous stream of circumstance. History, in general, has been called the spirit of the race—the story of the race; it requires a whole series of individuals, of ages, and periods, to make up the entire account of it; and, rising from the perusal of Dr. Milman's history, the reader will, we believe, think that such a story, in continuity and succession of person, period, and age, has been set before him. The review of a work large as this, in so brief a space as we can assign to it, can but be inadequate; and in no spirit of ingratitude to the historian is it that we are compelled to feel much of what we have before expressed, how mournful a story it is—for that which we conceive the church to be—so mournful that, looking upon it from such a view as that which historians of the school of Dr. Milman would present to us, we should be compelled to regard the church and the world as one great failure, but for considerations it does not seem the province of such an historian to present to his readers. Little volumes like Neander's *Memorials of the Christian Life*, and *Light shining in Dark Places*, seem to us to unfold more distinctly than either his Church history, or Geisler's, or Milman's, the idea of the church as contemplated by its Founder and Lord. There is the story of the seed which germinated silently, and sprang up day and night, men know not how: in some such pages is found the story of the good seed, only a fourth part of which seems to have yielded any blessed results when sown. The best and most comfortable thing that can be said after all, is, that He, who gave his life for the sheep, and knew where the failures as well as the successes of his followers would be found, distinctly prophesied and spake of a "kingdom that would not come with observation, and "would not be of the world." Taking either the Papal idea of the church, of an embodied organization, or Dr. Milman's idea of the church of a history widening with the progress of the suns, the idea of the church seems to be a failure. Rome, as a kingdom, fulfilled, in the immensity of her conquests and colonizations, her idea; England, as a nation, in the immense resources of her wealth, strength, and freedom, has fulfilled her idea. Take the history of the church



and put it by the side of the New Testament, and the great idea of the church seems to be unfulfilled; but, regarded beneath lights and aspects we wish Dr. Milman had more copiously introduced, the church has not been a failure. A heaven it has been, in society, in every kingdom which it has penetrated, the subtle power of which has been altogether beyond the account of the charters of kings, and the croziers of prelates. We have incomparably more faith in that which invisibly relates itself to, which yet assuredly manifests itself in, the development of the Christian church. So far as it goes, Dr. Milman's history is undoubtedly the most elaborate and delightful we have hitherto in our language; but we yet wait for another, more elaborate and comprehensive. How long shall we wait?

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#### IV.

##### MR. DICKENS'S ROMANCE OF A DUST-HEAP.\*

AFTER a lapse of nearly ten years, Mr. Dickens has returned to his old, and apparently still much beloved method of developing his various impressions of social life, and entertaining his multitude of readers. We do not wonder that for him this method has strong fascination, so that he says he holds the advantages of the mode of publication during which the plot and persons of a story are two years in the course of unfolding their relations to each other, to outweigh the disadvantages. Undoubtedly, for writers of Mr. Dickens's character, this method has its advantages. We have always thought that with him to tell a story was the least part of his design; his characters affect him far more than his plot; he writes, as we shall see, much more for the purpose of holding up sketches of society, home life, and individual idiosyncrasy, than for the purpose of telling a tale. This is not so thoroughly remarkable in any of his other works as in the *Pickwick Papers*, but it does characterize them all. Hence, while, of course, you want to get at the secret—and every story must have its secret—you are even well satisfied

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\* *Our Mutual Friend*. By Charles Dickens. With Illustrations by Marcus Stone. 2 vols. Chapman and Hall.

with every number, because it not only carries you forward in the story, but is a portfolio of sketches in Mr. Dickens's own manner, of the graphic, the quaint, and the queer, of the London life of our times; added to which, as a grateful and affectionate man, Mr. Dickens can never be insensible to that strange fame in which he suddenly found himself encircled nearly thirty years since, when, in every nook and corner of England, and of our empire, in every London coffee-house, in every tolerably intelligent household room, there was going on, all England over, from month to month, a succession of shocks of laughter. Mr. Dickens has done many better things, we believe, than the *Pickwick Papers*; but they were so new, and he was so fresh and young, that we do not wonder at his affection for that mode of publication, which must be to him such a pleasant memory in the history of his fame.

But Mr. Dickens has now, to our knowledge, for sixteen years been haunted by a great Dust-heap. In the *Household Words* for 1850 first appeared the account of that amazing mound. All his life long, at any rate in all that portion of it with which the public is acquainted, our writer has been industriously engaged in attempting to ferret out the bright things in dirty places; he has been like a very Parisian chiffonnier, industriously searching, with intense eye, among the sweepings, the odds and ends, and puddles of society, if haply some overlooked and undiscovered loveliness might not be found there. In the sixteenth number of the *Household Words* for 1850, he surprised many of his readers by a description of some of those huge, suburban heaps and mounds, more common and conspicuous, we fancy, then than now. We should think that our readers have not forgotten the paper. A Dust-heap, he told his readers, was very frequently worth thousands of pounds. Here is the paragraph out of which, we suppose, has grown, to its huge dimensions, the present story:—

The principal ingredient of all these Dust-heaps is fine cinders and ashes; but as they are accumulated from the contents of all the dust-holes and bins of the vicinity, and as many more as possible, the fresh arrivals in their original state present very heterogeneous materials. We cannot better describe them, than by presenting a brief sketch of the different departments of the Searchers and Sorters, who are assembled below to busy themselves upon the mass of original matters which are shot out from the carts of the dustmen.

The bits of coal, the pretty numerous results of accident and servants' carelessness, are picked out, to be sold forthwith; the largest and best of the cinders are also selected, by another party, who sell them to laundresses, or to braziers (for whose purposes coke would not do so well);

and the next sort of cinders, called the *breeze*, because it is left after the wind has blown the finer cinders through an upright sieve, is sold to the brickmakers.

Two other departments, called the "soft-ware" and the "hard-ware," are very important. The former includes all vegetable and animal matters—everything that will decompose. These are selected and bagged at once, and carried off as soon as possible, to be sold as manure for ploughed land, wheat, barley, &c. Under this head, also, the dead cats are comprised. They are, generally, the perquisites of the women searchers. Dealers come to the wharf, or dust-field, every evening; they give sixpence for a white cat, fourpence for a coloured cat, and for a black one according to her quality. The "hard-ware" includes all broken pottery,—pans, crockery, earthenware, oyster-shells, &c., which are sold to make new roads.

"The bones" are selected with care, and sold to the soap-boiler. He boils out the fat and marrow first, for special use, and the bones are then crushed and sold for manure.

Of "rags," the woollen rags are bagged and sent off for hop-manure; the white linen rags are washed, and sold to make paper, &c.

The "tin things" are collected and put into an oven with a grating at the bottom, so that the solder which unites the parts melts, and runs through into a receiver. This is sold separately; the detached pieces of tin are then sold to be melted up with old iron, &c.

Bits of old brass, lead, &c., are sold to be melted up separately, or in the mixture of ores.

All broken glass vessels, as cruets, mustard-pots, tumblers, wine-glasses, bottles, &c., are sold to the old-glass shops.

As for any articles of jewellery,—silver spoons, forks, thimbles, or other plate and valuables, they are pocketed off-hand by the first finder. Coins of gold and silver are often found, and many "coppers."

Meantime, everybody is hard at work near the base of the great Dust-heap. A certain number of cart-loads having been raked and searched for all the different things just described, the whole of it now undergoes the process of sifting.

Since the publication of this paragraph, of course many of these heaps have been compelled to yield to that great Macadamizing spirit of change and progress, the railway line and station. The North London line now probably cuts right through that very region where stood Mr. Boffin's Bower, and the vast heap of miserly old John Harmon. Thus, it is only like Mr. Dickens to attempt to construct his fairy palace upon such an unsightly mound. A romance from a Dust-heap is so far from impossible that it is not even improbable. Following Mr. Dickens's observant eye and rapid foot, other visitors have traversed and circumambulated these extraordinary mounds. In that excellent and arousing little book, *The Missing Link*, there is a chapter entitled "The Bible Woman among the Dust-



heaps ;” and many facts recited in that interesting little chapter go to confirm the more romantic and imaginative settings of the great social novelist. All sorts of things are found in the Dust-heaps ; inferior things which poverty, necessity, or science knows how to turn to account ; or rings, brooches, silver spoons, forks, and golden sovereigns occasionally get carted away, while, among Dust-heaps, there are places like stables, in which the much-enduring and ravenous poor live. These find in the Dust-heap other things than brooches and sovereigns, as appears in a story like the following, told by the authoress of *The Missing Link* :—“The kind city missionary of the district once “went in to visit an old man, who, being bed-ridden, asked “him to stir the saucepan on his fire ; the missionary observed, “in doing so, ‘that it was a savoury mess.’ The reply was, “‘Well, mayhap, you mightn’t like to eat it, sir ; it’s some “‘bones well washed, and some potatoes, and onions, my wife “‘picked off the heap ; it’s very well for me.’” So much for the place on which Mr. Dickens picked up his story. Somewhere, we gather about a spot, very well known to ourselves, upon which, when we lived in the neighbourhood, we often thought a fiction of another kind might have been reared, a district between King’s Cross and Holloway, turning out of Maiden Lane, known to the inhabitants and the neighbours as *Belle Isle*, a name derived from an old French refugee, who lived there for many years, brought as much of the manners and the blasphemy of his country as he could with him, and, when he died, left them as a legacy behind him. The spot, however, was very likely twenty-five years since a pleasant little bit of rural suburbanness, and still, until the recent railway changes, retained, to an eye able to see it, something of its old character in the little detached cottages, with the little patches of garden before most of them. Gradually accumulated the Dust-heaps ; the more respectable labouring class, or London-clerk-like character of the houses faded away, and we only saw Mr. Boffins Bower in its decline, just before it made way for the traffic and goods department of the immense station.

Needless work, we presume, it would be to attempt to tell the outline of Mr. Dickens’s story. Most of our readers have either read, or will read it ; those who have not read will, perhaps, not thank us for attempting to tell it. We have already said, however, that, as in all Mr. Dickens’s books, so in this, the story is only a part of the work. Yet, perhaps, as a story, it is quite equal to any Mr. Dickens has told ; it is sustained throughout ; there is nothing in the plot too strained or unnatural. Mr. Dickens has not always been thought happy in this, for a writer

with so much of nature ; he has sometimes and often devised most unnatural positions and situations. He has been fond always, and he has continued his old trick in this book, of giving to the very virtues of some of his characters an unnatural and unvirtuous aspect, as in *The Battle of Life*, *The Cricket on the Hearth*, &c. There can be no justification for John Harmon's marrying under an assumed name ; it was a poor way either to test or to reward the faithfulness and affection of his very bright and delightful little wife, Bella Wilfer, who certainly, if ever a woman deserved confidence, complete and full, deserved it. If the secret had to be maintained for a time, surely a right conception of every kind of duty, legal not less than emotional, would have commanded the revelation, at any rate to the wife, before marriage. We have called this an old vice of Mr. Dickens, and it is so ; he is fond of putting goodness into false positions, so that a solemn reader, sometimes, shakes his head, and says, " I don't know whether to call that goodness or the contrary," and feels as Mr. Inspector felt when he became possessed of the secret, " a disposition to break at intervals "into such soliloquies as that ' he never did know such a move, " that he never had been so gravelled, and that what a game " "this was to try the sort of stuff a man's opinion of himself " "was made of." Yet there is less that offends in this way than in many other works of the writer, as even in *Great Expectations*, where the reader is startled by the half grotesque and half horrible episodical thread of Miss Haversham. Perhaps the first thing which will strike the reader in the work will be its severe, although good-natured satire upon, we will not say our social foibles, but our great social sins ; the Veneerings, Podsnaps, the Lady Tippinses, the invisible Lord Snigsworth, the Brewers, Boots, and Buffers, expressing in their persons the voice of " society." It is to be supposed that we have all been victims in some such dinner party as the following :—

Mr. and Mrs. Veneering were bran-new people in a bran-new house in a bran-new quarter of London. Everything about the Veneerings was spick and span new. All their furniture was new, all their friends were new, all their servants were new, their plate was new, their carriage was new, their harness was new, their horses were new, their pictures were new, they themselves were new, they were as newly married as was lawfully compatible with their having a bran-new baby, and if they had set up a great grandfather, he would have come home in matting from the Pantechnicon, without a scratch upon him, French polished to the crown of his head.

For, in the Veneering establishment, from the hall-chairs with the new coat of arms, to the grand pianoforte with the new action, and



upstairs again to the new fire-escape, all things were in a state of high varnish and polish. And what was observable in the furniture, was observable in the Veneerings—the surface smelt a little too much of the workshop and was a trifle sticky.

There was an innocent piece of dinner furniture that went upon easy castors and was kept over a livery stable-yard in Duke Street, Saint James's, when not in use, to whom the Veneerings were a source of blind confusion. The name of this article was Twemlow. Being first cousin to Lord Snigsworth, he was in frequent requisition, and at many houses might be said to represent the dining-table in its normal state. Mr. and Mrs. Veneering, for example, arranging a dinner, habitually started with Twemlow, and then put leaves in him, or added guests to him. Sometimes, the table consisted of Twemlow and half a dozen leaves; sometimes, of Twemlow and a dozen leaves; sometimes, Twemlow was pulled out to his utmost extent of twenty leaves. Mr. and Mrs. Veneering on occasions of ceremony faced each other in the centre of the board, and thus the parallel still held; for, it always happened that the more Twemlow was pulled out, the further he found himself from the centre, and the nearer to the sideboard at one end of the room, or the window-curtains at the other.

But, it was not this which steeped the feeble soul of Twemlow in confusion. This he was used to, and could take soundings of. The abyss to which he could find no bottom, and from which started forth the engrossing and ever-swelling difficulty of his life, was the insoluble question whether he was Veneering's oldest friend, or newest friend. To the excogitation of this problem, the harmless gentleman had devoted many anxious hours, both in his lodgings over the livery stable-yard, and in the cold gloom, favourable to meditation, of Saint James's Square. Thus. Twemlow had first known Veneering at his club, where Veneering then knew nobody but the man who made them known to one another, who seemed to be the most intimate friend he had in the world, and whom he had known two days—the bond of union between their souls, the nefarious conduct of the committee respecting the cookery of a fillet of veal, having been accidentally cemented at that date. Immediately upon this, Twemlow received an invitation to dine with Veneering, and dined; the man being of the party. Immediately upon that, Twemlow received an invitation to dine with the man, and dined: Veneering being of the party. At the man's were a Member, an Engineer, a Payer-off of the National Debt, a Poem on Shakespeare, a Grievance, and a Public Office, who all seemed to be utter strangers to Veneering. And yet immediately after that, Twemlow received an invitation to dine at Veneerings, expressly to meet the Member, the Engineer, the Payer-off of the National Debt, the Poem on Shakespeare, the Grievance, and the Public Office, and, dining, discovered that all of them were the most intimate friends Veneering had in the world, and that the wives of all of them (who were all there) were the objects of Mrs. Veneering's most devoted affection and tender confidence.



This evening the Veneerings give a banquet. Eleven leaves in the Twemlow; fourteen in company all told. Four pigeon-breasted retainers in plain clothes stand in line in the hall. A fifth retainer, proceeding up the staircase with a mournful air—as who should say, “Here is another wretched creature come to dinner; such is life!”—announces, “Mis-ter Twemlow!”

Mrs. Veneering welcomes her sweet Mr. Twemlow. Mr. Veneering welcomes his dear Twemlow. Mrs. Veneering does not expect that Mr. Twemlow can in nature care much for such insipid things as babies, but so old a friend must please to look at baby. “Ah! You will know the friend of your family better, Tootleums,” says Mr. Veneering, nodding emotionally at that new article, “when you begin to take notice.” He then begs to make his dear Twemlow known to his two friends, Mr. Boots and Mr. Brewer—and clearly has no distinct idea which is which.

We have quite got to deserve this satire to which all people—we suppose Mr. Dickens amongst the rest—yield themselves, and which everybody votes an infinite annoyance and bore. A more empty, wretched thing than a modern dining-out, or a modern evening party, society has never invented. Too unhappily, the Podsnaps and Veneerings constitute a very large proportion of our English population; the amazing transmutations of wealth, the rapid series of metempsychoses and transmigrations by which a Whitechapel costermonger may now become a stupendous West-end parvenu, are so frequent; and, of course, the standard of modern society is the house, the carriage, the dinners, which make it impossible for those who desire to struggle into a kind of social importance to be other than subject to such frequent jostlings against the Veneerings and the Podsnaps.

Mr. Dickens does not think very highly of the modern mode of making money; rather type-people in that way are Alfred Lammle, Esq., and Mr. Fledgeby. Mr. Lammle is reputed to be a gentleman of property—is really a mere share-gambler:—

He invests his property. He goes, in a condescending amateurish way into the City, attends meetings of Directors, and has to do with traffic in Shares. As is well known to the wise in their generation, traffic in Shares is the one thing to have to do with in this world. Have no antecedents, no established character, no cultivation, no ideas, no manners; have Shares. Have Shares enough to be on Boards of Direction in capital letters, oscillate on mysterious business between London and Paris, and be great. Where does he come from? Shares. Where is he going to? Shares. What are his tastes? Shares. Has he any principles? Shares. What squeezes him into Parliament? Shares. Perhaps he never of himself achieved

success in anything, never originated anything, never produced anything? Sufficient answer to all; Shares. O mighty Shares! To set those blaring images so high, and to cause us smaller vermin, as under the influence of henbane or opium, to cry out, night and day, "Relieve us of our money, scatter it for us, buy us and sell us, ruin us, only we beseech ye take rank among the powers of the earth, and fatten on us!"

Glorious old Mr. Boffin's money came out of dust. His immense fortune raised him instantly to be a man of mark, his patronage and support coveted by men who, from their scale of rank, would have looked with overwhelming scorn upon Mr. Boffin's "antecedents." Mr. Podsnap, like Mr. Veneering, suggests what he was in his name—one of those gamblers with which society abounds. He had put his original property by a good inheritance from a wife, with lucky speculations in the Marine Insurance way. "He was an "eminently respectable man, and being such, Mr. Podsnap "was sensible of its being required of him to take Providence "under his protection; consequently, he always knew exactly "what Providence meant. Inferior and less respectable men "might fall short of that mark; but Mr. Podsnap was "always up to it, and it was very remarkable, and must have "been very comfortable, that what Providence meant, was in- "variably what Mr. Podsnap meant." Mr. Podsnap it is, principally, who has got his biographer into hot water about the Poor Law. In Mr. Podsnap's palatial halls, at one of his dinner parties, a certain discussion took place referring to the existing Poor Law. Some meek man holding, it would seem, some of Mr. Dickens's heresies, had referred to some half-dozen people who had lately died in the streets, of starvation. "I don't "believe it," says Mr. Podsnap; the meek man was afraid we must take it as proved from the inquests and the registrar's returns.

The man of meek demeanour intimated that truly it would seem from the facts, as if starvation had been forced upon the culprits in question—as if, in their wretched manner, they had made their weak protests against it—as if they would have taken the liberty of staving it off if they could—as if they would rather not have been starved upon the whole, if perfectly agreeable to all parties.

"There is not," said Mr. Podsnap, flushing angrily, "there is not a country in the world, sir, where so noble a provision is made for the poor as in this country."

The meek man was quite willing to concede that, but perhaps it

rendered the matter even worse, as showing that there must be something appallingly wrong somewhere.

"Where?" said Mr. Podsnap.

The meek man hinted Wouldn't it be well to try, very seriously, to find out where?

"Ah!" said Mr. Podsnap. "Easy to say somewhere; not so easy to say where! But I see what you are driving at. I knew it from the first. Centralization. No. Never with my consent. Not English."

An approving murmur arose from the heads of tribes; as saying, "There you have him! Hold him!"

He was not aware (the meek man submitted of himself) that he was driving at any ization. He had no favourite ization that he knew of. But he certainly was more staggered by these terrible occurrences than he was by names, of howsoever so many syllables. Might he ask, was dying of destitution and neglect necessarily English?

"You know what the population of London is, I suppose," said Mr. Podsnap.

The meek man supposed he did, but supposed that had absolutely nothing to do with it, if its laws were well administered.

"And you know; at least I hope you know;" said Mr. Podsnap, with severity, "that Providence has declared that you shall have the poor always with you?"

The meek man also hoped he knew that.

"I am glad to hear it," said Mr. Podsnap with a portentous air. "I am glad to hear it. It will render you cautious how you fly in the face of Providence."

In reference to that absurd and irreverent conventional phrase, the meek man said, for which Mr. Podsnap was not responsible, he the meek man had no fear of doing anything so impossible; but——

But Mr. Podsnap felt that the time had come for flushing and flourishing this meek man down for good. So he said:

"I must decline to pursue this painful discussion. It is not pleasant to my feelings; it is repugnant to my feelings. I have said that I do not admit these things. I have also said that if they do occur (not that I admit it), the fault lies with the sufferers themselves. It is not for *me*"—Mr. Podsnap pointed "*me*" forcibly, as adding by implication though it may be all very well for *you*—"it is not for me to impugn the workings of Providence. I know better than that, I trust, and I have mentioned what the intentions of Providence are. Besides," said Mr. Podsnap, flushing high up among his hair-brushes, with a strong consciousness of personal affront, "the subject is a very disagreeable one. I will go so far as to say it is an odious one. It is not one to be introduced among our wives and young persons, and I——" He finished with that flourish of his arm which added more expressively than any words, And I remove it from the face of the earth.



We are very thankful to Mr. Dickens for his courage, for it needed some, to say all this, in setting the flagrant enormities of our most wicked, heartless, and national neglect before all his readers. He has, we know, been rather severely treated by sundry critics and circumlocutional champions. He has very greatly anticipated his present line of remarks many years since; so long since as the publication of *The Chimes* and *Hard Times*, Mr. Dickens has been no friend to the present Poor Law and its administration. Mr. Bounderby could never see any difference between leaving the Coketown hands just exactly as they were, and requiring them to be fed with turtle soup and venison out of gold spoons. Mr. Dickens tells us, what we can well believe, that he has had idiotic propositions of a parallel nature offered for his acceptance, calling upon him to admit that he would give Poor-Law relief to anybody, anywhere, and anyhow. He contemptuously puts aside such nonsense; in his postscript he says:—

That my view of the Poor Law may not be mistaken or misrepresented, I will state it. I believe there has been in England since the days of the Stuarts, no law so often infamously administered, no law so often openly violated, no law habitually so ill-supervised. In the majority of the shameful cases of disease and death from destitution, that shock the public and disgrace the country, the illegality is quite equal to the inhumanity—and known language could say no more of their lawlessness.

For ourselves, we also take the opportunity of expressing our profound sense of the great inhumanity and general inefficiency, in all large towns and districts, and especially in London, of the existing Poor Law. We attempted to state our impressions strongly at the commencement of the present year. We know that the administration of such matters is very greatly in the hands of the Veneerings and Podsnaps, the Brewers and Buffers, and we therefore scarcely know how to expect or hope for satisfactory change; but those thick strata of destitute and wretched poor may well excite our gravest fears; and that in the practical administration of the law no difference should be drawn between Rogue Riderhood and Betsy Higden, may well fill every humane heart with indignation. One thing it would be impertinent and ignorant to attempt to deny, people with hard hearts, thick heads, and good digestions—the three great qualities which command success—may attempt to make out a case for the Poor Law; but there is no possibility of resisting or overcoming Mr. Dickens's facts. We have plenty in our own

memory of a like nature. We trust this subject will soon receive searching revision and improvement.

But such portions of the book as those to which we have referred form only its side-scenes and characters. We are glad to get away from the halls of Veneering and Podsnap, and the whole of the unpleasant lot. Once again we have to say, fresh as if he had never written upon London before, the book is quite in Mr. Dickens's old, well-known vein. One feels that he loves London, and knows all its nooks and corners, courts and alleys, high streets and bye streets well. In every work he interests us by some new, well-drawn, and sharply-defined London-life character. Sometimes one makes his appearance reminding us that Mr. Dickens has produced a character somewhat like it before, as in the case of Mr. Inspector, who reminds us very much of our old friend, Buckett, in *Bleak House*; yet this remark, it may be, is not quite just, for the one circumstance most indisputable about Mr. Dickens's immense procession of characters, next to their remarkable variety, is their distinctness and individuality; certainly, in some things, he is almost unexampled. It has been truly said that he could not see a blind beggar with a dog on the curb, or a pump in a London court, or any character of society, high or low, without instinctively, at a glance, fetching out of it the especial grotesqueness or ridiculousness, the queer, human suggestion, let us also add as true, the touching and pathetic. It is in this mingled vein of the queer, quaint, grotesque, and pathetic that the undertaker and his men, blossom-faced, pompously striding before and by the side of the corpse, seem, in their affected and stately walk, like policemen of the D(eath) division.

It is in his later works he has more especially trailed through his pages the sombre garments of tragedy; perhaps the tragic does not strike and startle so impressively in *Our Mutual Friend* as in *Bleak House*, but the reader feels at the commencement that he is near to a tragic suggestion, and something of the shadow is frequently thrown across the book, if not arising from the main circumstance, then from the other characters, the occupations of their lives and their incidents. The picture of the bird of prey, Gaffer Hexam, slowly creeping in his boat down the Thames, with his daughter Lizzie, dragging for the dead body, will, we think, impress most readers as a striking piece of London-life painting. On the Thames and along its shores, some of the most vivid of the scenery is sketched. The night scenes, if we may call them such, on the river, and in the neighbourhood of the river, are given with painful strength, and when the bird of prey is brought down, that shivering night,



while Lizzie is waiting for father, and all the careless life goes on in the six jolly fellowship porters, and the poor girl hears borne in to her, through the rain and the mist, the strange mystical cry of her father, the reader will, we think, feel himself out in that rain, along that shore, among those ships, and be unable to escape from the weary, miserable fascination by which it compels him. Fond of conducting some character through a hunt or a flight, Mr. Dickens often tells some such story: our readers recollect the wanderings of the old man with little Nell, the terrible and pitiful tragedy of Lady Dedlock's long rushing from place to place, and night to night; the reader feels the same impression of interest through those chapters to which we have referred, in which the bird of prey is brought down; but Betty Higden and her flight is in our author's sweetest style of sympathy with the proud but holy poor. Critics of the hard-headed school will call this mere sentiment. Such critics have been fond of charging upon Mr. Dickens the spreading upon his palate certain colours, and sketching out upon his canvas certain patchwork forms intended to produce the mingled effects of the grotesque and the pathetic; but very different is our impression. There are many things in the writings of Mr. Dickens, perhaps in these volumes, which we regret, and from which we are free to dissent; but, true in these, his last essays, to the spirit of his earliest works, the poor—the poor, lowly, unknown outcasts and offcasts, seem to be the objects of intensest interest to him. "Mr. Dickens," say many of his critics, "always fails when he attempts to draw the habits of good society; then he becomes a mere caricaturist." But is not a good deal of what we call "good society" itself mere caricature?—a caricature upon living, not life itself? These critics surely would not intend to imply that Mr. Dickens does not know "good society," as it is called, as well as he knows the haunt of Gaffer Hexam, the cottage of Betty Higden, the home of Mr. Wilfer, or the factory and lodgings where Lizzie found both labour and rest? But we could very well conceive Mr. Dickens replying, were he to condescend to reply, to such critics, "Well, I know what you call 'good society,' but it is not so interesting to me; it is monotonous; it wants variety, it wants earnestness. Even Rogue Riderhood, the villain, is a more entertaining character to me than your Podsnaps. There is a character all alive, no make-up there; neither whitewash, veneer, nor lacquer; an utter rascal, but a most interesting one, always up to dodges, which are not merely a shuffling of shares about, but dodges having all the interesting intensity of a real rascal in them;" and that Rogue Riderhood is one of Mr. Dickens's most sustained and thorough



portraits; every rag, every syllable, every accent, everything about the ill-looking dog, is as complete as a bull-dog would be if Landseer painted him. A fascination for low life beckons Mr. Dickens into and through all out-of-the-way places; he is perpetually attempting to show the bright lights which gleam round the walls of poorest cottages, the rays of holy effort and hope which lighten up the humblest hearts and lowliest lots. We are not concerned to put in any very long defence for Lizzie, who must, we suppose, be regarded as the heroine. The character, in its origin and growth, is far away from impossible. We think we ourselves have known some such. But the love of our author for the poor is not shown in selecting a heroine from their lowliest ranks, and giving to her the attributes and the instincts of highest womanhood—this any novelist might do;—his affection for the poor is like that of Wordsworth for nature; it is a compelling instinct, and it is shown in the distinct eye he has for all the humblest pieces of furniture which mark the poor and scantily furnished dwelling, and the tenderness and strength with which he touches the meanest lives and their destinies. He has a power of imparting life to buildings, to dead things, things that never lived; the abundant humanity of the man makes him see a human relationship in everything; and just as satirists have been fond of tracing animals in human faces, the kinder humorist, on the contrary, gives to mute and to material things some touch of kindred nature, making the thing, or the place, or the house alive with human feeling. Thus the old Dustman's Bower, and the room in which he died:—

A gloomy house the Bower, with sordid signs on it of having been, through its long existence as Harmony Jail, in miserly holding. Bare of paint, bare of paper on the walls, bare of furniture, bare of experience of human life. Whatever is built by man for man's occupation, must, like natural creations, fulfil the intention of its existence, or soon perish. This old house had wasted more from desuetude than it would have wasted from use, twenty years for one.

A certain leanness falls upon houses not sufficiently imbued with life (as if they were nourished upon it), which was very noticeable here. The staircase, balustrades, and rails, had a spare look—an air of being denuded to the bone—which the panels of the walls and the jambs of the doors and windows also bore. The scanty moveables partook of it; save for the cleanliness of the place, the dust into which they were all resolving would have lain thick on the floors; and those, both in colour and in grain, were worn like old faces that had kept much alone.

The bedroom where the clutching old man had lost his grip on life, was left as he had left it. There was the old grisly four-post bed-

stead, without hangings, and with a jail-like upper rim of iron and spikes; and there was the old patchwork counterpane. There was the tight-clenched old bureau, receding atop like a bad and secret forehead; there was the cumbersome old table with twisted legs, at the bedside; and there was the box upon it, in which the will had lain. A few old chairs with patch-work covers, under which the more precious stuff to be preserved had slowly lost its quality of colour without imparting pleasure to any eye, stood against the wall. A hard family likeness was on all these things.

Betty Higden is one of his most touching, we think truthful, paintings of this order. The death of "our Johnny" is one of these pathetic lights from the homes of the poor. The little creature, the grandchild of Betty Higden, and the adopted of Mr. and Mrs. Boffin, died in some child's hospital. The "boofer lady" referred to was Bella Wilfer, who had once seen him with her bright radiant face, and had given him kisses from among her cloud of curls. But with his Noah's ark, and other toys, he had been transferred to the hospital to die, old Betty wailing and weeping with him. Is not this in Mr. Dickens's best manner?—

Johnny's powers of sustaining conversation were as yet so very imperfectly developed, even in a state of health, that in sickness they were little more than monosyllabic. But, he had to be washed and tended, and remedies were applied, and though those offices were far, far more skilfully and lightly done than ever anything had been done for him in his little life, so rough and short, they would have hurt and tired him but for an amazing circumstance which laid hold of his attention. This was no less than the appearance on his own little platform, in pairs, of All Creation, on the way into his own particular ark: the elephant leading, and the fly, with a diffident sense of his size, politely bringing up the rear. A very little brother lying in the next bed with a broken leg, was so enchanted by this spectacle that his delight exalted its enthralling interest; and so came rest and sleep.

"I see you are not afraid to leave the dear child here, Betty," whispered Mrs. Boffin.

"No, ma'am. Most willingly, most thankfully, with all my heart and soul."

So they kissed him, and left him there, and old Betty was to come back early in the morning, and nobody but Rokesmith knew for certain how that the doctor had said, "This should have been days ago. Too late!"

But, Rokesmith knowing it, and knowing that his bearing it in mind would be acceptable thereafter to that good woman who had been the only light in the childhood of desolate John Harmon dead and gone, resolved that late at night he would go back to the bedside of John Harmon's namesake, and see how it fared with him.



The family whom God had brought together were not all asleep, but were all quiet. From bed to bed, a light womanly tread and a pleasant fresh face passed in the silence of the night. A little head would lift itself up into the softened light here and there, to be kissed as the face went by—for these little patients are very loving—and would then submit itself to be composed to rest again. The mite with the broken leg was restless, and moaned; but after a while turned his face towards Johnny's bed, to fortify himself with a view of the ark, and fell asleep. Over most of the beds, the toys were yet grouped as the children had left them when they last laid themselves down, and, in their innocent grotesqueness and incongruity, they might have stood for the children's dreams.

The doctor came in too, to see how it fared with Johnny. And he and Rokesmith stood together, looking down with compassion on him.

"What is it, Johnny?" Rokesmith was the questioner, and put an arm round the poor baby as he made a struggle.

"Him!" said the little fellow. "Those!"

The doctor was quick to understand children, and, taking the horse, the ark, the yellow bird, and the man in the Guards, from Johnny's bed, softly placed them on that of his next neighbour, the mite with the broken leg.

With a weary and yet a pleased smile, and with an action as if he stretched his little figure out to rest, the child heaved his body on the sustaining arm, and seeking Rokesmith's face with his lips, said:

"A kiss for the boofer lady."

Having now bequeathed all he had to dispose of, and arranged his affairs in this world, Johnny, thus speaking, left it.

Betty's flight from the Poor Law guardians, and scarcely less from her friends, is drawn with great pathos:—

Old Betty Higden fared upon her pilgrimage as many ruggedly honest creatures, women and men, fare on their toiling way along the roads of life. Patiently to earn a spare, bare living, and quietly to die, untouched by workhouse hands—this was her highest sublunary hope.

Nothing had been heard of her at Mr. Boffin's house since she trudged off. The weather had been hard and the roads had been bad, and her spirit was up. A less stanch spirit might have been subdued by such adverse influences; but the loan for her little outfit was in no part repaid, and it had gone worse with her than she had foreseen, and she was put upon proving her case and maintaining her independence.

Faithful soul! When she had spoken to the Secretary of that "deadness that steals over me at times," her fortitude had made too little of it. Oftener and ever oftener, it came stealing over her; darker and ever darker, like the shadow of advancing death. That the shadow



should be deep as it came on, like the shadow of an actual presence, was in accordance with the laws of the physical world, for all the light that shone on Betty Higden lay beyond death.

The poor old creature had taken the upward course of the river Thames as her general track; it was the track in which her last home lay, and of which she had last had local love and knowledge. She had hovered for a little while in the near neighbourhood of her abandoned dwelling, and had sold, and knitted and sold, and gone on. In the pleasant towns of Chertsey, Walton, Kingston, and Staines, her figure came to be quite well known for some short weeks, and then again passed on.

She would take her stand in market-places, where there were such things on market days; at other times, in the busiest (that was seldom very busy) portion of the little quiet High-street; at still other times she would explore the outlying roads for great houses, and would ask leave at the lodge to pass in with her basket, and would not often get it. But ladies in carriages would frequently make purchases from her trifling stock, and were usually pleased with her bright eyes and her hopeful speech. In these and her clean dress originated a fable that she was well to do in the world: one might say, for her station, rich. As making a comfortable provision for its subject which costs nobody anything, this class of fable has long been popular.

In those pleasant little towns on Thames, you may hear the fall of the water over the weirs, or even, in still weather, the rustle of the rushes; and from the bridge you may see the young river, dimpled like a young child, playfully gliding away among the trees, unpolluted by the defilements that lie in wait for it on its course, and as yet out of hearing of the deep summons of the sea. It were too much to pretend that Betty Higden made out such thoughts; no; but she heard the tender river whispering to many like herself, "Come to me, come to me! When the cruel shame and terror you have so long fled from, must beset you, come to me! I am the Relieving Officer appointed by eternal ordinance to do my work; I am not held in estimation according as I shirk it. My breast is softer than the pauper-nurse's; death in my arms is peacefuller than among the pauper-wards. Come to me!"

Still, as she went on, she became insane in her flight from the dreadful poor-house, and in lines of very distinct and sustained feeling, our writer follows her upon her way. She falls into fits and drops down on the road, but as soon as she is restored, she is up again on her way:—

The morning found her afoot again, but fast declining as to the clearness of her thoughts, though not as to the steadiness of her purpose. Comprehending that her strength was quitting her, and that the struggle of her life was almost ended, she could neither reason out the means of getting back to her protectors, nor even form the idea. The overmastering dread, and the proud stubborn resolution it engendered in her to

die undegraded, were the two distinct impressions left in her failing mind. Supported only by a sense that she was bent on conquering in her life-long fight, she went on.

The time was come, now, when the wants of this little life were passing away from her. She could not have swallowed food, though a table had been spread for her in the next field. The day was cold and wet, but she scarcely knew it. She crept on, poor soul, like a criminal afraid of being taken, and felt little beyond the terror of falling down while it was yet daylight, and being found alive. She had no fear that she would live through another night.

Sewn in the breast of her gown, the money to pay for her burial was still intact. If she could wear through the day, and then lie down to die under cover of the darkness, she would die independent. If she were captured previously, the money would be taken from her as a pauper who had no right to it, and she would be carried to the accursed work-house. Gaining her end, the letter would be found in her breast along with the money, and the gentlefolks would say when it was given back to them, "She prized it, did old Betty Higden; she was true to it; and while she lived, she would never let it be disgraced by falling into the hands of those that she held in horror." Most illogical, inconsequential, and light-headed, this; but travellers in the valley of the shadow of death are apt to be light-headed; and worn-out old people of low estate have a trick of reasoning as indifferently as they live, and doubtless would appreciate our Poor Law more philosophically on an income of ten thousand a year.

So keeping to byways, and shunning human approach, this troublesome old woman hid herself, and fared on all through the dreary day. Yet so unlike was she to vagrant hiders in general, that sometimes, as the day advanced, there was a bright fire in her eyes, and a quicker beating at her feeble heart, as though she said exultingly, "The Lord will see me through it!"

By what visionary hands she was led along upon that journey of escape from the Samaritan; by what voices, hushed in the grave, she seemed to be addressed; how she fancied the dead child in her arms again, and times innumerable adjusted her shawl to keep it warm; what infinite variety of forms of tower and roof and steeple the trees took; how many furious horsemen rode at her, crying, "There she goes! Stop! Stop, Betty Higden!" and melted away as they came close; be these things left untold. Faring on and hiding, hiding and faring on, the poor harmless creature, as though she were a Murderess and the whole country were up after her, wore out the day, and gained the night.

"Water-meadows, or such like," she had sometimes murmured, on the day's pilgrimage, when she had raised her head and taken any note of the real objects about her. There now arose in the darkness, a great building, full of lighted windows. Smoke was issuing from a high chimney in the rear of it, and there was the sound of a water-wheel at the side. Between her and the building, lay a piece of water, in which the

lighted windows were reflected, and on its nearest margin was a plantation of trees. "I humbly thank the Power and the Glory," said Betty Higden, holding up her withered hands, "that I have come to my journey's end!"

She crept among the trees to the trunk of a tree whence she could see, beyond some intervening trees and branches, the lighted windows, both in their reality and their reflection on the water. She placed her orderly little basket at her side, and sank upon the ground, supporting herself against the tree. It brought to her mind the foot of the Cross, and she committed herself to Him who died upon it. Her strength held out to enable her to arrange the letter in her breast, so as that it could be seen that she had a paper there. It had held out for this, and it departed when this was done.

"I am safe here," was her last benumbed thought. "When I am found dead at the foot of the Cross, it will be by some of my own sort; some of the working-people who work among the lights yonder. I cannot see the lighted windows now, but they are there. I am thankful for all!"

\* \* \* \* \*

The darkness gone, and a face bending down.

"It cannot be the boofer lady?"

"I don't understand what you say. Let me wet your lips again with this brandy. I have been away to fetch it. Did you think that I was long gone?"

It is as the face of a woman, shaded by a quantity of rich dark hair. It is the earnest face of a woman who is young and handsome. But all is over with me on earth, and this must be an Angel.

"Have I been long dead?"

"I don't understand what you say. Let me wet your lips again. I hurried all I could, and brought no one back with me, lest you should die of the shock of strangers."

"Am I not dead?"

"I cannot understand what you say. Your voice is so low and broken that I cannot hear you. Do you hear me?"

"Yes."

"Do you mean Yes?"

"Yes."

"I was coming from my work just now, along the path outside (I was up with the night-hands last night), and I heard a groan, and found you lying here."

"What work, deary?"

"Did you ask what work? At the paper-mill."

"Where is it?"

"Your face is turned up to the sky, and you can't see it. It is close by. You can see my face, here, between you and the sky?"

"Yes."

"Dare I lift you?"

"Not yet."



"Not even lift your head to get it on my arm? I will do it by very gentle degrees. You shall hardly feel it."

"Not yet. Paper. Letter."

"This paper in your breast?"

"Bless ye!"

"Let me wet your lips again. Am I to open it? To read it?"

"Bless ye!"

She reads it with surprise, and looks down with a new expression and an added interest on the motionless face she kneels beside.

"I know these names. I have heard them often."

"Will you send it, my dear?"

"I cannot understand you. Let me wet your lips again, and your forehead. There. O poor thing, poor thing!" These words through her fast-dropping tears. "What was it that you asked me? Wait till I bring my ear quite close."

"Will you send it, my dear?"

"Will I send it to the writers? Is that your wish? Yes, certainly."

"You'll not give it up to any one but them?"

"No."

"As you must grow old in time, and come to your dying hour, my dear, you'll not give it up to any one but them?"

"No. Most solemnly."

"Never to the Parish!" with a convulsed struggle.

"No. Most solemnly."

"Nor let the Parish touch me, nor yet so much as look at me!" with another struggle.

"No. Faithfully."

A look of thankfulness and triumph lights the worn old face. The eyes, which have been darkly fixed upon the sky, turn with meaning in them towards the compassionate face from which the tears are dropping, and a smile is on the aged lips as they ask:

"What is your name, my dear?"

"My name is Lizzie Hexam."

"I must be sore disfigured. Are you afraid to kiss me?"

The answer is, the ready pressure of her lips upon the cold but smiling mouth.

"Bless ye! *Now* lift me, my love."

Lizzie Hexam very softly raised the weather-stained grey head, and lifted her as high as Heaven.

\* \* \* \* \*

"WE GIVE THEE HEARTY THANKS FOR THAT IT HATH PLEASED THEE TO DELIVER THIS OUR SISTER OUT OF THE MISERIES OF THIS SINFUL WORLD.'" So read the Reverend Frank Milvey in a not untroubled voice, for his heart misgave him that all was not quite right between us and our sister—or say our sister in Law—Poor Law—and that we sometimes read these words in an awful manner, over our Sister and our Brother too.

We cannot quote anything from Mr. Dickens with the hope of indicating any new or hitherto unmarked characteristics of style—only for the sake of imparting pleasure, and showing that those same lines of interest with which all his previous works have abounded, continue still: the same variety of inferior characters too—inferior we mean to the general plot and scheme of the story—some of whom we would have liked, like casual fellow passengers in a railway carriage with whom we have spent a little time, to know more, like the Rev. Frank Milvey and his wife, of whom our author in a sentence of singular beauty we think, says, “They were representatives of hundreds of other “good Christian pairs, as conscientious and as useful, who “merge the smallness of their work in its greatness, and feel in “no danger of losing dignity when they adapt themselves to “incomprehensible humbugs.” And throughout the whole volumes, let the critics call it sentiment or by what name soever they will, there is a geniality and kindliness, even a religiousness of feeling which pervades, like an influence, the whole—as the author says in one of his noblest aphorisms and truest strokes, “This is the eternal law. Evil often stops short at itself and dies with the doer of it, but good never does.”

What relation does the work bear to the long range of the author's previous works? Have his admirers cause to grieve over the evident decadence of his genius and powers? It has been said for a long time his powers have been in their decay; we have never been able to perceive this. It must be remembered that Mr. Dickens has created a style of social painting and writing; he has hosts of imitators now who attempt to write about, and look at men and things in the same manner; he has, to a great extent, as we have already said, created or quickened that feeling in which man is dear to man. But in the volumes through which we have just glanced, we have abundant evidence of the still imperial superiority of Mr. Dickens in his own old field of work. The critic again will remark upon, and quarrel with, his diffuseness; it is so, but it is his style. He is not a Pre-Raphaelite in painting; or if he be, he is not content merely to give the cold, hard, and unrelieved, and Millais-like expression. It must be understood that Mr. Dickens, like the great Sir Walter, takes a personal love and interest in filling in the details of an impression. His details, though they look diffuse, will, we believe, generally be found to add something to the picture he desires to convey to the mind, like that variety of placards, with the ominous inscription, *Found Drowned*, round the rude room of Gaffer Hexam; they seem to bring themselves even into a Pre-Raphaelite distinctness—the occupation of the man, and the whole furniture

of the place, and perhaps the agility of Mr. Dickens's eye is greater than the weight of his brain. His books are like streets; he does not exact from his readers so much thought as rapid observation and feeling; his books are like himself, illustrations of incessant mental activity, sympathy, and interest. He carries his reader along with him from place to place, and does not aim to tighten his sentences into cords. He has very little of that which, in the general use of language, is called wit; he does not seek to make his sentences bite, hence, to, many readers they seem wanting in the proper proportion of mental strength. To many persons agility never can indicate strength; the tenacity and spring of the tiger is held as contemptible by the slow stride of the elephant; the strengths are different. Mr. Dickens we will not suppose to be much acquainted with books in general, or the reading life through bibliopolic spectacles; we take him to be thoroughly up in newspapers, thoroughly up in the use of his own eyes, and not the less reflective because he is not the more homiletic, though occasionally, as we have seen, he preaches, and preaches severely too. Our admiration, therefore, of him is not unconsciousness of other qualities possessed by other writers, and which he does not possess; but in the feeling of the infinite ease with which he manipulates his own material—the rapid spring and dart of his social sympathies, and of that overflowing kindness of heart, which his wide knowledge of man in all his relations, that shrewd glance into social foibles, and appalling sins, are unable to impair or prevent. But, for the reasons we have mentioned, it perhaps follows that Mr. Dickens has not the finished and symmetrical power of the artist in the proportion of some two or three of his cotemporaries; perhaps in that particular, even the present work may be found to fall short. What became of Potterson and Kibble after Mr. Inspector hand-cuffed them away? Had John Harmon any difficulty in getting through a stiff cross-examination? What became of that utterly ungrateful young vagabond, whom we think we dislike as much as any hypocritical scamp we ever met with in fiction, Charlie Hexam? Did he repent? Why will not novelists look a little at the finish of their stories? These things seem to indicate haste in winding-up. But from the course of our criticism, it will be gathered that we, at any rate, do not think that this work indicates any declension in our writer's powers; on the contrary, it seems to deserve a place by the side of the two or three of the author's very best. Much higher and wider than *Great Expectations*, if without the peculiar soft English light of *David Copperfield*, if without the strong magic shadows of *Bleak House*, it should take



its place as their equal, still the more, because doing no injustice to the story or the painting as a whole. It is one of the clearest pieces of the author's great London scenes and social paintings; it ought to be a great sermon to those able to hear it. We close the volumes, and put them by with gratitude for much pleasure, and more especially with thankfulness, that Mr. Dickens, being where he is, and what he is, is able so courageously to speak and preach to, and reprove some of our great social sins; and with thankfulness, too, for the hope that he may yet be spared for many years to do the work of a man and a brother, in the work of an artist. We are glad to close as he closes, and give him our hearty congratulations that he is able to write for himself and for his readers that cheerful little note:—

On Friday the Ninth of June in the present year, Mr. and Mrs. Boffin (in their manuscript dress of receiving Mr. and Mrs. Lammle at breakfast) were on the South Eastern Railway with me, in a terribly destructive accident. When I had done what I could to help others, I climbed back into my carriage—nearly turned over a viaduct, and caught aslant upon the turn—to extricate the worthy couple. They were much soiled, but otherwise unhurt. The same happy result attended Miss Bella Wilfer on her wedding day, and Mr. Riderhood inspecting Bradley Headstone's red neckerchief as he lay asleep. I remember with devout thankfulness that I can never be much nearer parting company with my readers for ever, than I was then, until there shall be written against my life, the two words with which I have this day closed this book:—THE END.

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## The Congregational Topic.

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### V.

#### PLAYING AT DOING GOOD.

ONE of the most perplexingly painful reflections to a thoughtful mind, is the review of the immense expenditure of purposeless effort in the Christian world. As we pass through society, we seem to be perpetually brought into the neighbourhood of some ocean or other, into tempest tossed, "to waft a feather or to drown a fly." Multitudes of Christian folk are beheld prosing and dreaming, and when some some astonishment presses on the spirit that Christianity takes so little hold upon society, the thought is followed into the mind swiftly by that other, that neither the ambitions of commerce, nor science, nor conquests, would ever be fulfilled if their schemes were pursued in the same purposeless and indifferent manner. Over the whole of our country, more especially, crowds of persons are engaged in playing at doing good. We do not mean to imply that these persons are not good, or that the thing in which they are engaged is not good as far as it goes; but the good in them, and the good which is pursued by them, is rather sentimental

than real; in a way, they are kept occupied and are kept out of mischief; but there is no strong directness of impression, either on their mind or in their work. Thus, at present, both world and church have a fit of conferences, congresses, and the like gatherings upon them. The congress and conference seem to have taken the place of annual meetings, which have come to be regarded as a sort of dreary purgatorial necessity, in which men, called deputations, hash up their cold, stale meats, and deliver themselves with funereal solemnity and lifeless inanity, beneath the influence of surrounding and unpeopled space. The annual meeting used to be a great event in the lives of those who kept up the game of playing at doing good. As it is at present, an annual meeting, from the May Meetings downwards, through all the larger or lesser country towns, and only excepting the little village districts where the meeting is really an event, and the stories of the speaker are listened to with as much reverence, almost, as if they were portions of the Acts of the

Apostles—with this exception, they are a dreary and needless bore, an immense waste of time, money, and effort, resulting in no impulse or inspiration to achieve an end which would be better answered with infinitely more ease and satisfaction by the simple printing of a report. This is an impression now very generally abroad, and being so, it has become necessary to adopt new expedients for attracting attention, hence the congress, &c., &c. Multitudes of men, ministers, and laymen, flock and throng together from all parts of the empire to some given point, to play at doing good. During the session, or at the close of any number of sessions, it would be a difficult thing to discover what great good had been served, or what healthful end had been answered, unless, running down the list, the absence of a number of the most quietly earnest, and saintly men, might be taken as giving some clue to the character of such gatherings. We have been amazed that Lord Brougham, in these his venerable days, has yielded himself to this mania. Social science congresses, and working men's club unions; one hears a lot of talk at them, talk, talk, talk, that greatest of modern nuisances, that arch-inventor of the gods of laziness and sleep. A paper is read, or perhaps a committee of five or six is appointed who file off to consider the paper

read, and presently, amidst the hushed and profound, yet agitated emotions of the expectant assembly, the report is brought up—paper and report in which, perhaps, no soul in the universe is interested, certainly not a soul outside the august assembly, and in the assembly no soul so deeply as the little cock-sparrow who, with his spectacles on nose, cocked up his tail to deliver himself of it—so fluttering out into the little brief importance of an hour or two, in the thought that through that important and influential organ, the *Humdrum Gazette*, the eyes of the world would be, for a time, fixed upon him. This is one of the most approved of modern methods of playing at doing good. Of course we shall be told that such gatherings focalize opinion—we believe that is the graceful and euphonious mode of putting it—That they are the pleasant and refreshing opportunities in the recollection of dinners and déjeuners, let us say, also, comfortable opportunities, for the re-union of noble and kindred minds. Perhaps so; we are just now taking up the drum-stick of our little lad; his drum is a great thing with him, nor is there any harm in it; it is a toy of childhood—to him a very pleasant toy of childhood, to our ears sometimes more a than little too noisy. We are obliged to say to him sometimes, "Don't beat that drum so loudly;" the dear little fellow is never



silly enough to say that the house would fall to pieces if he did not beat his drum. We would not for the world think of taking it away from him; nor would we think of taking away its pretty little noisy congress, or its delightful little rub-a-dub-dub of a conference from our dear religious child; but let us call things by their right names; let it be understood that these things do not go much beyond a playing at doing good.

The modern committee presents a field not certainly of lively sport, although a department of the same game. There is nothing more unhealthy to a religious mind desirous, of really being useful than to be brought into the neighbourhood of that curious invention, a modern committee. William Jay's word is very well known, "Had Noah waited for a committee to build the ark, it would never have been built, and he and his would have been drowned in the flood." At present, this seems to be a great point with the world and the church. Salvation everywhere waits upon that wonderful creature, that star-fish kind of substance, if we ought not rather to say, that crab-like kind of creature, with any number of arms, and no head, and famous for going backwards, a committee. What a fancy?—but it is too bold a dream for our imagination, which is only a poor one, and able to deal with inferior flights—a great European refor-

mation managed by a committee, a great national revolution accomplished by a committee. Indeed, we have heard of the last; but it was only possible, as every member of the committee was a real living acting person, with a definite work before it—a determination to keep the work up until it was done, and the whole committee informed and filled by one eminently earnest mind: with Richard Cobden and the League there was no playing at doing good. Most committees are bits of straw held together by a crystallization of ice. They succeed invariably not of themselves, because a committee is usually a lifeless, conscienceless, aimless thing; but there is usually also for success—and there is no success without it—some eminent heart and brain to which that which is to be done does not come as play, but as work. While these words are going through our pen, these thoughts through our mind, we are glad to see that a testimonial is in the course of presentation to Mr. Joseph Soul, the Secretary of the Haverstock Hill Orphan Asylum. We are not very greatly in favour of testimonials in general, as we have said before, so we say again; we distinctly declined the other day to give our name and subscription to the Mutual Testimonial and Appreciation Society. We would that churches and societies testimonialled less, and remunerated better;

but we give to Mr. Joseph Soul our most hearty admiration for the incessant vigilance, the pertinacious and intensely troublesome earnestness with which he has worked all his days, and hours, and nights, and thoughts, and feelings into the interests of his asylum. He has been the means, by his labours, of enlarging the home, and deserves, himself, to be called the father of the very many orphans, greatly by his skill, earnestness, and ability, added to the asylum; and we hope the testimonial will, in some measure, express the sense of his services; worthy, of course, it cannot be. The most innocent and admirable testimonials always, to the very measure to which they are that fall, short of adequate expression. Yes, pleasant, sarcastic, hard-mouthed brother, we know Joseph Soul very well; but it is some years since we spoke to him. Neither he nor any person interested in the Testimonial knows aught of these little words of ours, only it falls in our way to say, Here is a man, and the servant of a committee and society, who has not played at doing good. There are others, of course there are others; we would not have been invidious to mention one, had not the purpose seemed to justify; but a committee is not the less frequently a mere dead weight on the different actions of the church. A modern committee! Sometimes it seems as though the church were

intensely active, the world rapidly becoming evangelized, and the devil unable to destroy, determined to hinder and prevent by inventing committees. We have often said, when wonders have been expressed to us that more has not been done by such and such a society, how could you expect more to be done, is it not a committee? See the secretary, poor fellow, he deserves to be sympathized with, by A. K. H. B., as one who carries weight in life; he carries a whole committee; "I wonder he does not get on," said one to us the other day, "I wonder he does not get on better, faster." It was of an excellent minister the remark was made; and we said, "Ah! we should wonder if he did; why, he has to carry all his deacons on his back." Officialism plays at doing good; gets to be put into conspicuous and sentimental situations. Office has pretty invariably been found to be a sort of moral morphine—a sleeping draught; it is a most amusing fairy story, that takes possession of the imagination of a man in office frequently; he supposes he must be doing something, even though he be fast asleep, merely because he is in office; and it has been judged an admirable counter-irritant in many states to administer a dose of office to a man a little likely to be troublesome. Perhaps when he was troublesome he was more real, but the office did his business for

him, and henceforth he must content himself with playing at doing good. Through how many illusions we might follow the parable ! Do you suppose we are not in earnest, Mr. Reader ? Do you suppose we are inditing this paper as a little joke that has crossed us ? Verily no, we are afflicted by the sight of it. We seem to be surrounded on all hands by those to whom religious things are as a very lovely song, or as one who playeth well upon a stringed instrument. Crowds of sentimental Christians go wandering up and down. Who shall ever estimate a millionth part of the mischief which has resulted from the pestilential heresies of those called Plymouth Brethren, "*The Plyms*," as we generally hear them called, in certain and not the lower circles of religious society. Good was the remark of the venerable and amiable Dr. Judson—true to the letter in our experience—when the devil sees a convert with superior capacities for Christian usefulness, and finds it impossible to seduce him back to the world, he makes a Plymouth Brother of him, and so renders him useless. Papists and Plyms, both dwell in very much the same latitude of the religious life ; they are both cruelly and hatefully intolerant ; they both utterly ignore and denounce all other sheep not of their fold, and all fruit on other branches of the true and living Vine not theirs ; they both evaporate Scrip-

ture, in its more distinct and searching meanings, beneath frivolous and vapid criticisms, and make the Word of God of none effect ; they even play with the Word themselves. No title seems more becoming to them than that of sentimental Christians, especially these Plyms. Upon that great heresy rests the burden of having, in innumerable instances, evaporated into a misty, cloudy sentiment the work and truth of the Christian life ; no sect more nearly approaches that awful parable of our Lord, of the unfaithful steward who beat his fellow servants : but in a less but equally certain degree, the same playing at being pious, and playing at doing good, spreads, creeps like a thin, filmy, lazy, at last thick and cloudy autumn mist, over the fair meadow lands of the church. Oh, the stupidity of certain sentimental Christian folks ! It is a little time since a lady put into our hands a tract containing the soft and bland impeachment, " You were drunk last Sunday." We do not doubt the poor lady had the best intentions ; but people with the best intentions are sometimes as mischievous in the church as elsewhere. She had a bundle of tracts, and they had to be given away ; that was her mode of playing at doing good ; good people are so thoughtless. We often marvel at their thoughtlessness ; the way in which they distribute their tracts, the stories they tell us of tract district-visitation, visi-



tation of the poor and the sick. Sometimes, we are compelled to feel how amazing are the mistakes made. The Sunday-school teacher who takes a class one part of the day, and neglects it another, takes it for a few weeks and gives it up altogether, is playing at doing good. We are persuaded that in religious action, as in all else, nothing abides but work; nothing abides but what is earnest—even Schiller's play-spirit; what he meant was earnestness at ease; using its powers not less royally because happily. And, alas! it is sad to us to say it—we have much to learn from the tactics of that people, we should of all others dread and recoil from, Papists and Puseyites, as to the emancipation of our religious organizations from the illusion of playing at doing good. There is a good deal of this playing at doing good in the pulpit. Less cannot be said than that during the two hundred years of its settled existence, the Church of England has used its pulpit power sadly and shamefully. Playing at preaching is surely one of the most solemn games in which a thoughtless and unhallowed nature can expend itself; but there is a good deal of playing at doing good in the pulpit a long way short of the more shocking extremes—the finikin fastidiousness over sermons; the preparation of inflated finery, the manufacture of tinselly, gew-gawish

expression, the dressing-out the poor body in ridiculous literary degrees, the pompous artificialities of bombastic rhetoric. It is to be supposed that the persons who are guilty of all these freaks, would be appalled if they were questioned as to whether they meant to do good or harm. They do suppose that, in some sense, they are doing good; but it is not a working at doing good, but a playing. To this same playing at doing good belongs the "starring it" in great sermons for great occasions, in which, as Mr. Binney himself has somewhere said, the preacher becomes a "wandering star, or a strolling-player, tempting benevolence with a promise of pleasure." We shall not receive any oration of gratitude for these words of ours; but we do not write bitterly, only affectionately, in the sight of a manifest defection. We do not at all charge *our pulpit* with falseness; it does want earnestness; in it, many men really do only play at doing good.

A beloved and venerated friend told us, some short time since, a story of some Christian workers of upwards half a century since. In a town eighty miles from London, in the South of England—now one of the most important in England, then not so well known—the intelligence came to the venerable old minister—who had held his witness and his testimony there for many years, with an income much less than £100 a year—that a

London Missionary Society was to be formed, and he was invited to be present in London at its first meetings, and his people determined to send him, and to send him with a good-will offering too. So, on the Sunday previous, he told all his congregation that he was going, and he asked for their contributions, expecting that by a strong effort even so much as £20, a great sum in those days, might be raised. Morning, afternoon, and evening, as was usual, the good man preached stirring missionary sermons, full of the missionary thought, full of missionary texts, full of the warmth of that dear old day—"Where is the Lord God of Elijah?" We may be sure the good man did not play in the pulpit; after each service, the money had been put into the well-known green baize bags uncounted, that it might be counted at the close, but at the close of the last service of the day, he said, "No, we won't count it yet. I don't leave until Tuesday morning. We shall have our regular prayer-meeting to-morrow night. Then, perhaps, we shall have a little more coming in; at any rate we will pray over it." And so the next night, we have been told,

the people sang while the minister and deacons counted up the collections, and to the amazement of all, the collections amounted to more than £100. Joyfully they went with him to the coach the next morning; he was not going to play at being a deputation; there was a meaning in his mission, and the good man went up, and attended the great meeting at Freemasons' Hall. It was a day's journey up, and a day's journey home, but he was back again by Thursday night, his people full of excitement to hear all about the wonderful meeting, and the great design, for they believed so intensely in things invisible; and thus to him said the deacons,—"While you were in London, we also had a meeting. What we raised the other night made us ashamed that we had not thought more about you, and we have been having another collection, and we see our way to give you almost as much again each year." We like to hear, as we wander over the country, these pleasant little unprinted legends of Christian earnestness; it is delightful always to meet with those of any time to whom the Christian life was work, and not *playing at doing good*.